Teachers Make The difference

A Teacher Education dossier

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Teachers Make the Difference

(A Teacher Education Dossier)

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INDIA

The *Shiksha Karmi* Project was launched in Silora, Ajmer district. The simple concept of the project is the selection of two village persons in order to replace the trained, but frequently absent, primary school teacher. Provided with initial and on-the-job training and support, these two community members become responsible for teaching all the children of their village, who otherwise, would not have an opportunity to get an education. Hence, they are called "education workers", not "teachers." The *Shiksha Karmis* themselves usually have only a basic formal education (up to grade 5 for women and grade 8 for men).

The *Shiksha Karmi's* role to ensure minimal levels of learning for all children (ages 6 to 14) in their respective villages. Existing primary schools (grades 1 to 5) which were usually run by a single teacher, are now run by a team of two SKs. Students at these schools are, for the most part, ex-dropouts. The goal is to enable them to continue their studies and re-enter the mainstream system after grade 5. SK schools use the standard state syllabuses and textbooks, but have introduced innovative teaching aids and special textbooks in Mathematics and Hindi.

UJALA : A Training package for Primary School Teachers, developed by UNICEF and the Bihar Education Project was designed with **two specific components—a ten day foundation course followed by cluster level enrichment sessions every month.** It is also envisaged that once all the teachers complete the foundation course, special inputs training will be initiated to tackle specific problems of the teachers.

unicef Teachers Make The Difference UNESCO

Rajasthan INDIA

THE *SHIKSHA KARMI* PROJECT IN RAJASTHAN

Background

India has the second largest education system in the world. Although free and compulsory education is mandated for students aged 6 to 12, 25 percent of children remain unschooled. Approximately 93 percent of teachers report job dissatisfaction. Classes are overcrowded, the teaching atmosphere is rigid and classes are textbook centred. Students are receivers of information, not active participants. Although Gandhi envisioned education as *learning by doing,* India's system does not, in general, reflect that ideal.

In the 1980s, the state of Rajasthan, the second largest state in India, was a reflection of the national conditions in education. About 30 percent of Rajasthan's population lives in remote, rural areas. Teacher absenteeism is one of the most critical problems facing the state education system.

Against this context, the *Shiksha Karmi* Project emerged as an alternative strategy to cope with teacher absenteeism and student dropout in primary education in remote rural areas through an innovative scheme that relies on the pedagogical potential and social commitment of ordinary people to help/solve the educational problems of their own communities. Special teacher training and support is provided to these *Shiksha Karmis* (Hindi for "education workers"), who are trained in multigrade and child-centered methodologies.

The Silora experience

The *Shiksha Karmi* concept was originally inspired in the work of a local NGO, the Social Work and Research Centre (SWRC). During the 1970s, in co-ordination with the Centre for Educational Technology (CET) in New Delhi and the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), an experimental project was conducted in three public primary schools in the villages of Tilonia, Buharu and Phaloda. The project aimed at reaching school dropouts in the 6-14 year age group; introducing better teaching-learning methods, adjusted to the rural environment and to students' daily experience; increasing parental and community involvement in the education process at schools; and recruiting and training village youths as education workers. SWRC monitored these three experimental schools from 1975 to 1978.

The *Shiksha Karmi* Project was launched in Silora, Ajmer district. The simple concept of the project is the selection of two village persons in order to replace the trained, but frequently absent, primary school teacher. Provided with initial and one-the-job training and support, these two community members become responsible for teaching all the children of their village, who otherwise would not have an opportunity to get an education. Hence, they are called "education workers", not "teachers." The *Shiksha Karmis* themselves usually have only a basic formal education (up to grade 5 for women and grade 8 for men).

In the first experiment in Silora, *Shiksha Karmis* were trained during a 30-day residential course at the SWRC campus. A special syllabus and teaching materials were prepared, and the training was conducted by professionals drawn from NCERT, retired educationists, and the SWRC. Three months later, when SKs were already teaching in schools, they were given further training, this time of three weeks duration, followed by continuous support in their work. Data in Silora indicated that student attendance increased substantially since the start of the experiment, and that it was most marked among girls and children from scheduled castes. This led to the idea of expanding the SK concept on a large scale within the state.

Shiksha Karmi Project expansion

In 1986 proposal for the SK project was drafted by consultants and representatives of the government of India, the government of Rajasthan, and the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA). The following year the project was initiated in several parts of Rajasthan.

The overall aim of the project is to revitalize and expand primary education in selected remote and culturally deprived villages in the state. Specifically, the project aims at countering teacher absenteeism in remote schools, and at increasing enrolment and reducing dropout from school, especially among girls.

Shiksha Karmi Schools

The *Shiksha Karmi's* role to ensure minimal levels of learning for all children (ages 6 to 14) in their respective villages. Existing primary schools (grades 1 to 5) which were usually run by a single teacher are now run by a team of two SKs. Students at these schools are, for the most part, ex-dropouts. The goal is to enable them to continue their studies and re-enter the mainstream system after grade 5. SK schools use the standard state syllabuses and textbooks, but have introduced innovative teaching aids and special textbooks in Mathematics and Hindi.

Night classes are organized for working children who are unable to attend school during the day. These are also the responsibility of the *Shiksha Karmis.* Typically, students who study at night have never attended school or have remained there only for a short while. Special curricula, condensed and with a practical thrust, are being developed for working children, together with more creative and enjoyable learning environments and methodologies.

To make schools more attractive to girls, *Aangan Pathshalas* (courtyard schools) have been opened and elderly women are invited to collaborate as *Mahila Sahyogi* (Woman Helper) to escort girls to school in difficult areas and take care of the students' siblings during classes.

Training for the *Shiksha Karmis*

The *Shiksha Karmi* Project understood that capacity building and training for the SKs needed to be a central component in the project. This is critical not only because of the modest educational qualification and lack of teacher training and teaching experience of the *Shiksha Karmis,* but also because they are entrusted with the mission of teaching in very difficult conditions—precariousness of the teaching-learning environment and the specific characteristics of the school clientele : poor, rural, working children, many of them with an interrupted school experience, thus requiring particular attention and renewed efforts. In fact, the key of the programme success has been the emphasis on the quality of support and encouragement provided to the *Shiksha Karmi.*

Objectives of the training programme

- to upgrade the initial educational qualifications of the SKs, particularly their own knowledge and understanding of Language, Mathematics and Science;
- to provide them with essential teaching knowledge and skills, and with a better understanding of the importance of making education responsive to the local environment as well as to children's and communities' needs;
- to reinforce solidarity, among SKs and with parents and students in their school;
- to give SKs personal and professional encouragement and support, through the collaborative work of resource people, local voluntary groups and government agencies.

Residential courses and refresher courses

The SK candidates take an initial residential 37-day course (which was initially of a 30 day duration). This is followed by two annual refresher courses of 10 and 30 days each. Additionally, 2-day meetings are held every month to discuss and solve problems, and for individual coaching.

The initial 37-day course is designed and conducted by SANDHAN, a local NGO. Although these courses have been very useful and appreciated by SKs, concerns have been raised by some trainers that the courses have become repetitive and monotonous because they follow a single training pattern. The need for more varied and tailored-planning has thus been recognised for each specific course.

Self-study and oriented study

SKs are consistently encouraged to improve their knowledge base and educational status through directed and self-study. The project subsidises the purchase of books and promotes study tours for the SKs.

Efforts to support, encourage and upgrade the competence of the *Shiksha Karmis* have included the following activities :

- participatory evaluation-cum-monitoring;
- the establishment of district/block resource units;
- field visits of block level staff;
- the publication of a monthly magazine for SKs with each issue containing correspondence lessons as well as instructions in academic and administrative matters; and
- village pre-implementation studies by SKs.

Women Shiksha Karmis–Mahila Shiksha Karmi (MSK)

The project concedes particular emphasis to gender issues and to the participation of girl students in day schools, women students in night schools, and women teachers as *Shiksha Karmis.*

The appointment of women teachers was initially viewed mainly as a supportive strategy to attract more girl students into schools, assuming that the presence of male teachers is an additional deterrent to the enrolment of girls. However the presence of Mahila (female) Shiksha karmis (MSK) in the centres has not emerged as a significant factor inducing girls' enrolment.

No women were involved as SKs in the 1984 Silora pilot project. It was not until 1986 that the MSK concept began to be developed in a systematic manner. By May 1990, 27 women had been trained as SKs. Identifying and training MSKs has evolved as a priority and a goal in itself within the project . Finding educated women in the villages and motivating them to enrol as Shiksha Karmis is however , difficult. This led initially to the decision of further relaxing the educational qualification requirements for SK candidates, in order to facilitate female recruitment. It was assumed that such a measure would also entail women SKs requiring special training and support efforts as compared with men SKs.

Approximately 80 percent of the MSKs belong to upper castes and the remaining 20 percent (5) are scheduled caste/scheduled tribes women. Although low, this percentage must be interpreted as an achievement of the SK project, inasmuch as it begins to challenge two forceful walls: gender and caste.

Most MSKs are young (23 is the average age) and have heavy domestic responsibilities. Most of them face family and societal disapproval of their role as *Shiksha Karmis*, and often face the same problems with their male co-workers–male SKs. However, despite the personal conflicts that many of them have to face, MSKs claim that their teaching role has brought them personal satisfaction and a sense of freedom, as well as a stronger interest in the education of their children and, particularly, of their daughters.

Training centres for women (MSKTC)

Special training centres have been established for MSKs in order to address the specific conditions of female candidates including the lower educational requirements expected of them and their specific needs in terms of space and time for training.

Special residential training centres have been set up for women. A three-year course was instituted whereby they would reach a level corresponding to grade 8. However, a three year course (despite periodic vacations) proved inadequate to meet the needs of many women since it entailed long absences by the trainees from their homes. A subsequent proposal consists of shorter courses that lead to the learning equivalent of grade 5, so that they can begin to function as MSKs as soon as possible and gain further qualifications through in-service training.

Project accomplishments

- A research study to assess children's achievement in SK schools was undertaken in 1990. Nine blocks were covered and 1,265 children were tested. The achievement tests revealed a clear difference between the performance of SK schools and regular schools: SK children's performance was consistently higher in group and individual tests, for the upgraded units and the graded classes. Children of SK schools performed significantly better on all the five tests in four blocks.
- By 1993, 782 villages in 64 blocks of 23 districts had been covered by the SK Project. The goal is to reach 1,050 villages.
- By 1993, 1,649 *Shiksha Karmis* had been trained and placed in 741 day schools and 1,489 night schools.
- A marked (300 percent) increase occurred in enrolment of children in the 6 to 14 year age group, from 30,000 at the time the *Shiksha Karmis* began to teach to 90,000 in September 1993.
- Overall, 8 percent of boys and 70 percent of girls aged 6 to 14 in the villages covered have been enrolled in SK schools. In 83 project villages the enrolment has reached 100 percent.
- Monthly attendance of school children increased by 32 percent, from 53 percent at inception to 85 percent in 1993.
- Participants report a sense of belonging, cooperation and understanding.

Conclusion

Why did children in the *Shiksha Karmi* Project achieve better learning scores than children in regular schools in literacy and numeracy, when their schools are poorly equipped, their teachers have less formal education, a much shorter teacher training course and no teaching experience when compared with their counterparts in the regular schools ?

Some factors explaining such results include :

(a) the SK school is within reach;

(b) the *Shiksha Karmi* is a resident of the village and therefore accessible and accountable to the people;

(c) the training programmes were more imaginatively planned than those of the standard basic education programme; and

(d) the continuous in-service model adopted seems to have a greater potential for success.

The attitude of the *Shiksha Karmis* toward children and toward teaching is a central element. They have managed to compensate their low qualifications with enthusiasm and a strong desire to teach. Their role has given them greater prestige in their neighbourhoods and families. Through their commitment and their enthusiastic teaching, the *Shiksha Karmis* are inspiring children, parents, and the community to view the schools as positive centres of learning.

The challenge of the *Shiksha Karmi* Project is to sustain the enthusiasm for, and the involvement in, the programme on the part of all those involved : students, SKs, parents, communities, and supporting institutions. It has been proposed that permanent resource centres, in-service training programmes, continuous participatory evaluation and net-working through newsletters be incorporated into the project.

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UJALA

A Training Package for Primary School Teachers

Background

The Bihar Education Project (BEP) initiated in 1991 with the prime objective of societal change through educational reconstruction is focussed on bringing about a qualitative improvement in primary education for all Bihar's children. **A midterm appraisal** conducted in 1994 recommended a change in the teacher training strategy as central to the achievement of the BEP goals.

The recommendations of the appraisal mission led to a thorough review of the teacher training activity. The following were seen as the major short comings :

1. The training was being organised in the conventional mode where the trainers were central and the trainees received inputs from them. It had very little in terms of participatory processes.
2. The emphasis was on imparting knowledge—content based; though there was a ten day motivational training followed by an eleven day input on content and pedagogy it failed to create any change in the classrooms.
3. The team-work among teachers within schools was lacking. Only one teacher at a time was called in from each school and there was a gap in doing things together.
4. Once the training was over, there was very little follow up at the field level. Very little had been done in terms of providing continuous skill upgradation and support at the school level.
5. The pace of training was slow thereby the coverage was very low, so that a visible impact in the schools was missing.
6. Competency based teaching learning processes were yet to be introduced.

"UJALA"—A New Beginning

The Project drew up a completely revamped teacher training programme-"UJALA". The other factors that influenced the design of the new training strategy were :

- The poor motivational level of teachers made further complicated by the numerous constraints under which they are forced to work. These include poor supervisory support and guidance, a poor teaching learning environment, often a non-responsive community and almost no cash support to the schools.
- The inevitability of the multi-grade/multi-level situation, which has further worsened with a steep rise in enrolment.
- Poor linkage of the Educational Department staff with the BEP in general and teacher training in particular.

In order to deal with the above the Ujala was designed with **two specific components—a ten day foundation course followed by cluster level enrichment sessions every month.** It is also envisaged that once all the teachers complete the foundation course, special inputs training will be initiated to tackle specific problems of the teachers.

The main objectives of the ten day training course which focusses on class one and two in the initial phase are as follows :

1. A high degree of motivational input to help teachers realize the crucial role that they play in tackling the ills in society and in shaping the future of the country.

2. To help them analyse the situation in their own villages, especially in the context of poverty, deprived/discriminated sections and gender related issues.

3. To help teachers appreciate the need for the active participation and ownership of the community in order to achieve desired results, especially in the context of UPE.

4. To help teachers understand the role of primary education in a child's life with particular reference to life skills.

5. To provide an insight into "child centred, activity based and joyful" teaching method where the emphasis is on stimulation and creativity.

6. To provide basic skills in using materials and concepts from the child's immediate environment as the basic teaching and learning material.

7. To help teachers to imbibe the concept of team training especially in the multigrade and multi level context.

8. To help teachers shed inhibitions and build up skills in singing, story telling, playing games, acting and more importantly their communication skills.

9. To build a training that could address the needs of teachers and provide for continuous training support.

*The other **key features** of Ujala training are :*

1. Each batch consists of 35 teachers, drawn from a cluster of 8 to 12 schools. All teachers from the primary schools and the Headmaster and teachers of Classes I and II of the middle school attend the training together.

2. The training is fully residential; the effort is to build a feeling of oneness among the teachers of each cluster.

3. The DSEs and the BEOs also are put through the same course, so that they fully understand the new approach that is being introduced in the schools and are able to support this important intervention.

4. The training is entirely conducted through participatory processes. The principles of "child centred, activity based and joyful" are fully translated into the training situation where the trainer functions only as a facilitator and a resource person whenever needed. A sincere attempt is made to ensure that the medium itself is the message.

5. The concept of team training is demonstrated. The training team of three members are together from the beginning till the end of the training. No other trainer is allowed to come in unless he/she is there from Day I.

6. A Training Support Group was set up by roping in a group of youth trained in participatory training processes to provide effective support at the state, districts and cluster levels. This group was also instrumental to ensure the quality of training.

EVOLUTION OF THE UJALA MODULE :

The Chanpatia experience

The Bihar Education Project with the assistance of UNICEF prepared an eight day training module and field tested it at the District Institute for Educational Training (DIET) at Kumarbag, W. Champaran, with 40 Primary Schools teachers of Chanpatia block from Ist to 7th of September, 1995.

The Chanpatia experience was a happy one. It demonstrated that if teachers were treated with respect and trust, then they could play their rightful role in the universalisation of the Primary Education. The eight day training programme was fully participatory in nature. The trainers played the part of facilitators. There were no trainers and there were no trainees. All were participants. Games, role plays, brainstorming, group discussions group work, etc, took the place of the traditional lecture method.

The teachers themselves made Teaching materials which they took with them for use in schools. They chalked out a Plan of Action for their respective schools. Subsequent follow-up showed the changing image of the primary schools. The teachers had redefined their role.

The same module with some refinement was used at the DIET in Simariya, Chatra, to train a group of carefully selected trainers from among those involved in the earlier training activities to carry out the UJALA trainings in BEP districts.

Training was then initiated in all the seven districts using this module and over one thousand teachers were trained in 28 batches. The training was then suspended due to the Lok Sabha elections where all teachers were inducted into the election process.

Strengthening the Training Module :

During January '96, Dr. R. S. Dave conducted orientation courses for the BEP staff on competency based teaching learning activities. This was followed by the development of MLL based text books in Maths and Languages. A twelve day training module incorporating MLL and the effective use of textbooks to the original eight day one was developed and tried out for one batch of trainers at DIET, Maraul in February, '96. This was once again reviewed and it was felt that the training could be effectively reduced to 10 days. Thus a 10 day training module was finalised for use in the project.

The booster courses were conducted prior to the finalization of the 10-Day Module. The booster courses were initiated in order to introduce the text books which by then had been developed. The Chanpatia and Simaria training programmes did not have any new textbooks, the thematic approach was used in those two trainings. Prior to the operationalising the 10–Day Module, 3 trainings of trainers were conducted at PRERNA, (the BEP Resource cum training centre) Patna.

The Initial Assessment :

The outcome of the eight day training, both observed at the training sessions and at the field level, further validated the strength of the module especially in the following important aspects :

- The training was beginning to transform most of the participating teachers into committed and motivated individuals ready to put in their best to improve their school environment and work towards the goal of UPE. Along with this, tardiness and irregularity was a thing of the past for most of the teachers who found a new meaning in their work.

- The immediate impact of the training was the visible change that took place in most of the schools—a clean and colour washed school with a blackboard all around for the use of children along with colourful charts and pictures donning the walls—thus making the schools attractive and child friendly.

- In most cases the teachers successfully made concerted efforts to enlist the participation of the community in the activities of the school, especially in the areas of doing up the schools and to some extent in the day to day running of the school.

- There have been perceptible changes in the teaching learning environment marked by plenty of singing and other joyful activities, thereby bringing about a friendly and open relationship between the teachers and children. Children are seen to be active and respond to visitors and others more confidently. The various songs sung in the schools are becoming part of community life, with the songs of empowerment being sung in the villages.

- The teachers were making attempts to make learning enjoyable. Reports of enhanced enrolment and attendance came in from different places.

This provided the impetus to the Project to attempt scaling up the training activities to cover all the teachers of the primary schools (approximately 17800) and two teachers who teach primary sections and the Headmaster of the middle schools, in the seven districts by end March 1996. **Fully aware of the risk of a possible drop in the quality of training by such a massive scaling up, the project decided to go ahead with enough safeguards.** Accordingly potential trainers from the 28 batches that were previously trained, as well as those from the Non-Formal and other streams within BEP were carefully identified and were put through intensive trainers training programmes. One rule that was strictly followed was that under no circumstances an individual who had not successfully undergone the full 10–Day training was considered for the training team.

An attempt was made to standardise the entire training package and all the trainers training courses were conducted at the state level by the Training Support Group with active support of the project and UNICEF. A Trainers Manual giving details of each of the session was prepared and made available to the trainers. Today a total of 170 trainers consisting of primary school teachers (59%), DIET trainers and BEP staff are organising and conducting the training with the help of the Training Support Group.

This entire operation of building up the teacher trainers to take on the massive task of training 26000 teachers was done during the period of the Lok Sabha elections between February and March 1996.

BUILDING THE TRAINING INFRASTRUCTURE :

To meet the challenge of training so many teachers before end March 1997, additional venues for holding training sessions were identified and strengthened.

Necessary repairs for the buildings, provision of water and toilet facilities and setting up the messing facilities was carried out in 35 training sites. These institutions were also provided with photocopying and cyclostyling machines, black boards, pocket boards, khadi boards, centry sheets, sketch pens, and other essential items for the smooth conduct of the training. While the DIETs are handling between two to four batches at a time, the others run one batch. These institutions are so selected that they could later be converted into block/cluster resource centres.

The Final Launch : Since actual training of teachers had to be delayed till May, due to the Lok Sabha Elections, the trained teachers had to be idle for some time. To make up for this gap, a three day wrap up camp was conducted for all the 120 trainers and the district project staff together at the DIET at Rambagh, Muzaffarpur in the first week of May '96. During these three days, plenty of games and fun was provided to raise the motivational levels of the trainers to a very high pitch. Different rooms were set up to once again demonstrate and explain the different exercises that were part of the module so that the trainers returned to their designated posts, well equipped. The training teams and the training plans were also drawn in this camp. The teams then moved into their training centres fully prepared to take on the challenge.

Current Status of Training : At present BEP conducts 35 batches of the 10 day training simultaneously covering a total of about 1225 teachers at a time. So far, close to 14,000 teachers have been imparted training.

Training Reflection Sessions : In order to provide continuous support to the trainers, as well as opportunities for them to share their experiences and discuss common problems, Trainers Reflection sessions being organised at two places simultaneously (trainers from three districts of N. Bihar get together at one place and from the four S. Bihar districts in the other) are also used to upgrade their skills in different pedagogical aspects. Resource persons are specially invited to these sessions.

Operationalising the Cluster Support System : As the training of each batch is completed, a new cluster is born. During the planning session on the last day of training, the teachers select their Cluster Resource Centre for the purpose of meeting on a monthly basis. This normally is a school that is conveniently located.

Providing the Cluster Resource persons is a challenge. This is met through identifying two/three potential trainers from each batch and putting them through a trainers training course. These trainers are then inducted into the regular training system where they are grouped with experienced trainers and join in imparting the ten day module. The teacher trainers that they replace are sent back to their own clusters as the cluster/block resource trainers. **Normally a teacher who is inducted to be a trainer spends about three months in the training centres as a trainer and will have the experience of participating in about ten 10 day training programmes.** Thus, these teachers gain considerable insight and experience as facilitators, fully conscious of the training needs of the teachers and the philosophy of the Project. Before sending them to the clusters they are given a further five day input, emphasising their role as cluster resource persons. While functioning as trainers, they also get enough exposure in the field, where they visit the schools and support the teachers in strengthening the learning environment of the school.

MAJOR ISSUES/QUESTIONS ADDRESSED

- What is Education ? How is it perceived by the different societal selections
- What is Primary Education ?
- Why and What of MLL ?
- Gender Sensitization
- Make UPE the goal of oppressed classes and women (and not of Govt., BEP, Education, Administration or teachers only)
- Why and How of theme based teaching in a joyful environment ? addressing the Multigrade situation.
- Class room interaction.
- Introduction to Language and Mathematics teaching.
- Making and use of teaching learning materials.
- Planning.

METHODOLOGIES

- Experiential learning through games and exercises
- Role Play
- Brainstorming
- Group Work/Discussion
- Preparation of MLL–linked TL materials
- Theme based mock teaching
- Songs, group songs, etc.
- Competency lists, other MLL materials discussed and distributed
- *Going by the dictum—"the medium is the message"—the entire training methodology is 'participant-centred[(child–centred), activity—based and joyful conducted in a tension free and friendly atmosphere.*

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- All teachers involved in the Primary Classes in both the Primary as well as the Middle Schools, along with their Headmasters, will be called for training together.
- Only after training the teachers of one Block, the teachers of another Block will be invited for training. Even within the Block, training will be conducted Clusterwise. Priority will be given to those Blocks/Clusters where Micro-level planning has been done or where Mahila Samakhya is active or where environment building has already started. Otherwise the environment building activity has to be initiated in such select Blocks/Clusters.
- For the purpose of training Village Education Committee members, priority will be given to those villages which have schools that are or will be taken up under this programme.
- The DSE, BEEO and the DEO will visit the training centre at least once during a training and listen to the teachers grievances and as far as possible try to solve them.
- Before the end of the training, each teacher from the Primary section will be given an amount of Rs. 500/= (five hundred) for developing Teaching–Learning materials. Each school will also get an amount of Rs. 2,000/= (two thousands) which will be for the basic requirements of the school. The amount will be made payable either by cash or cheque (as desired by the teachers).
- These trainings should be used as opportunities to forge closer ties with the Teacher Associations.

FIELD VISITS BY TRAINERS

As a number of the trainers do not have first hand teaching experience at the primary level, they are encouraged to visit schools. This is to enable trainers to assess the impact and outcome of the training and identify areas, based on this observation, where further strengthening and consolidation is necessary. These visits also have a catalystic effect on schools and teachers by the sense of identification and camaraderie that they engender between teachers and trainers. These also accord an opportunity to explain the nature of change taking place to the communities, who sometimes are taken a back by the rapidity of change and also the element of song and dance in the first few months of class I. With understanding comes a closer degree of association with what is happening at the school. It is hoped that gradually this will extend to what is taking place in the classroom.

CURRENT STATUS :

The field visits by different officials as well as feedback received from district teams and teacher trainers at individual discussions and formal meetings indicate the following:

- There has been a remarkable change in the school environment. Schools have been made attractive and the teachers have been making efforts to make teaching more joyful and child centred. Some doubts have been expressed on the question of **sustaining the attendance as per the enrolment.** It has also been observed that the **teachers are not fully capable of providing competency based learning opportunities** to children even though the teachers have been using songs and stories extensively.
- As mentioned earlier, the motivation of the teachers continues to be high. But **they lack the pedagogical skills to create effective learning opportunities for children.** The large number of children and the reality of the multigrade situation make teaching more complex.

- **A major achievement continues to be the establishment of links with the community.** There are very positive signs where the community is coming forward to help improve the conditions in the school. There are many instances where the community has largely contributed to the improvement of the physical structure of the schools and have been regularly organising the Village Education Committee meetings.

- A major weakness has been the inability to provide field level support to the teachers after the training. **Cluster Resource Centres are yet to be operationalised** due to the shortage of trained hands. This has been identified to be as important as the training in ensuring that the learning levels improve in the classrooms.

- Due to the induction of the Resource Persons and ARPs of the project into the training system, the district BEP offices find it very difficult to follow up on activities and are very much constrained. As a result supportive activities lag behind.

- There has also been some confusion on the textbooks since in most of the schools the old books are still in use. This confusion is also there in the training activity. The demand for the Ujala theme based materials is also unmet.

- An element of training fatigue has crept into many of the trainers due to the tight training schedule and the fact that the trainers have to put in a minimum of ten hours a day during the ten days of training. There have also been feeble demands for some incentives to compensate for the hard work that the teacher trainers are putting in, often without the benefits of any holidays.

LEARNING OUTCOMES SO FAR

- It is possible to develop Primary School teachers into teacher trainers and it is not necessary to have only specialists in training for this. Long term sustainability of reform in the education sector will come, since the agents of change have themselves become the key stakeholders in the success of the programme.

- Training alone is not the panacea for the ills befalling the primary education sector. It requires a comprehensive package of interventions comprising classroom level support, financial support to meet day to day needs, training and planning support on a monthly basis at the cluster level. Underpinning all this is the community mobilisation effort.

  The community is not as disinterested towards education as is commonly believed. In number of villages the community has shown commendable interest in the activities of the school. The need for training VEC's has been strongly reiterated.

- Many of the activities that are being undertaken during the training are being done in the schools by the teachers. There is a need to therefore build into the training such activities and exercises that can be done with the children in schools.

- Training on some of the days have a heavy content load and are therefore difficult to transact.

- Some of the teacher trainers have a difficulty in time management.

- A one time training will not lead to long term desired results.

- When large numbers of teachers are trained, there is bound to be a transmission loss. There is a need to keep reinforcing the basic learning principles and practices at different points of time.

- The last three days of the training module need substantial change to build stronger inputs on classroom interaction, specifically multigrade teaching of maths and language.

- The trainers need constant field practice to enable better understanding of the needs of teachers in the changing environment.

- Trainers need to have a more sound understanding of the theoretical principles of child psychology, learning and training methodologies.

Based on the experience so far, the following actions are now proposed :

- Review the motivational content of the module to make it more compact. The sessions on impact of poverty, levels of poverty and the broken square exercise may be dropped. Similarly the role plays could be reduced from five to four. (It would not be advisable to slash any more since each of the session is very closely tied up with the next and is designed to provide a clear understanding of the situation. It should also be noted that many of the sessions are directly linked to education and very much form a part of the MLL approach.)

- Redesign the last three and a half days to ensure that there is sufficient time for practice teaching especially focussed on the multigrade situation and competency based teaching. Get the teachers to be familiar with the worksheets and the effective use of it with the help of the pocket boards or other aids.

- So far the early morning hours have not been used for skill development. Introduction of singing, games and other creative activities in the morning for one hour could be of immense help. The teachers will not be averse to this since this has been the pattern of all their training.

- A few trainers complained about the motivational exercises spilling over to the following sessions. Though this was not the case in most of the training sessions there is need to look into this aspect. Those trainers who have problems need to be identified and supported for better time management, getting involved with the difficult sessions.

CONCLUSION :

On the whole, the results so far should be seen as very encouraging. There is an agreement that there is perceptible change in the schools. One of the single most important achievement is the induction . . of a good number of primary school teachers as trainers and the fact that almost all of them have improved tremendously in their skills as trainers. Most of them have conducted only five courses so far; yet their understanding of the module and the confidence this brings out is an indication of the success of the activity. The problems that are visible are only the fall out of the scaling up of the training activities and surely they could be addressed in the coming months. The concerned effort in developing a cadre of primary education activists through the induction of the primary school teachers as trainers should in the long run provide the answer.

■ ■ ■

COLOMBIA

"Despite difficulties, achievements have been obtained with the work at the Microcenters. One of these has been a questioning of traditional pedagogical practices. Another is new approaches to learning issues. Lastly, a new strategy for teacher training. There are already several teachers who have begun to develop small education research projects that fit the needs of the environment. For instance, a group of teachers has been working on the history of their municipality through a participatory methodology. Others work on new methodologies for the development of joyful learning and artistic activities. Difficulties still confront us, but if a better comprehension of the real function of teachers is achieved, the Microcenters may significantly have played a role in the development of a new cultural project." (Director of CEID, El Huila section).

"If we, teachers, do not reflect on what we do, we mechanize ourselves and we are not going to be aware of the problems and difficulties we have to overcome. The Microcenter is a tool that helps to detect conflicting points and possibilities for transforming the school."

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COLOMBIA

MICROCENTERS

AS A NATIONAL TEACHER TRAINING STRATEGY

The expansion of the Curricular Renewal *(Renovacion Curricular)* movement throughout the country (Decree 1002 of 1984), and a recognition of the difficulties faced by traditional approaches to teacher training, led the Colombian Ministry of Education (MEN) to experiment with alternative strategies for teacher education. It was officially stated that *"teacher training must be related to improvements in the quality and efficiency of education and of the national school system. This means that training must be targeted to preventing school failure, while enhancing the teacher as an individual, as professional and as promoter of development."*

Several studies conducted in Colombia have described the predominant pedagogical practice as rote learning, repetitive, authoritarian, discipline-centered, obedience-oriented, individualistic, and non-critical. A wide gap persists between pedagogical theory, teacher education and teaching practice. Traditionally, *in-service training* had been centered around courses and tied to bureaucratic regulations, with little connection to reality and to teachers' needs and practice.

Against this context, the MEN decided to revise the concept of teacher education, its objectives, approaches and modalities, particularly for in-service training. It was acknowledged that further training must help teachers fulfill their role as teachers as well as promoters of the community and social development, a role that requires teachers to possess theoretical and practical teaching competencies; be informed about, and have an opportunity to discuss, national education policies; have a deep understanding of the community and the environment where they work; and develop a high degree of social responsibility.

From this analysis emerged the Microcenters (Microcenters) for urban areas, and the *Escuela Demostrativa* (Demonstration School) for the rural areas. The Microcenter was defined as *"the basic cell of educational organization at the municipal level which consists of forming working groups of teachers and/or headmasters from one or several educational institutions at pre-school, primary, junior secondary and vocational secondary levels in order to carry out teacher-to-teacher training activities aimed at identifying needs, analyzing them, and searching for the best solution so that the problem can be resolved within the classroom, the educational institution, and the community."*

The Microcenter was thus conceived as an on-the-spot in-service teacher training strategy that would offer teachers an opportunity to engage in a teacher-to-teacher education process in which concepts are built, experiences are shared and solutions are envisioned and applied by teachers in their daily work. Thus, the Microcenter strategy implied deep changes not only in teachers' attitudes but in the overall school culture.

A number of organizational and administrative conditions were foreseen to enable teacher groups to meet and benefit from counselling, tutoring and permanent feedback from technical teams at the local and regional level. With this purpose, the MEN published basic guidelines for the organization, functioning and assistanship of the Microcenters in a series of *Bulletins*. Later, working methodologies were defined for the teacher-to-teacher exchange and to ensure that the overall Microcenter strategy had an impact on the quality of education and on increased teachers' awareness of their social responsibility.

Work at the Microcenters is structured around two elements:

(a) the Pedagogical Workshop aims at finding concrete answers to the problems faced by teacher in their handling of the curriculum and their relationship with parents

"Despite difficulties, achievements have been obtained with the work at the Microcenters. One of these has been a questioning of traditional pedagogical practices. Another is new approaches to learning issues. Lastly, a new strategy for teacher training. There are already several teachers who have begun to develop small education research projects that fit the needs of the environment. For instance, a group of teachers has been working on the history of their municipality through a participatory methodology. Others work on new methodologies for the development of joyful learning and artistic activities. Difficulties still confront us, but if a better comprehension of the real function of teachers is achieved, the Microcenters may significantly have played a role in the development of a new cultural project." (Director of CEID, El Huila section).

"If we, teachers, do not reflect on what we do, we mechanize ourselves and we are not going to be aware of the problems and difficulties we have to overcome. The Microcenter is a tool that helps to detect conflicting points and possibilities for transforming the school."

Such problems are discussed through group work, experience exchange and individual inputs; and

(b) the *Educational Project*, defined as *"the sequence of planned tasks with a practical aim that should be attained by means of co-operative work."*

Microcenters are now widespread in the country and viewed as a key strategy within the overall movement towards the improvement of Colombian education. In order to link teachers and their experiences at a national scale, an annual workshop called *Productos* (Products) enables teachers from different regions to demonstrate and discuss their initiatives and innovations.

MICROCENTERS AT WORK : THE RESULTS OF A STUDY

Research in the field of teacher education has been neglected in Colombia and other Latin American countries. Aware of this, the *Universidad Pedagogica Nacional* (National Pedagogic University) undertook research in this area. Such research has contributed to bring to the surface the crisis of teacher education in the country, particularly of in-service teacher training, and to promote experimentation with alternative strategies. Against this background, an exploratory study was undertaken in the Department of El Huila to assess the performance of local Microcenters.

The study, covering quantitative and qualitative dimensions, aimed at analyzing the validity of Microcenters as a teacher education strategy, their difficulties, achievements and prospects for the future.

Information was collected through a survey, direct observation, and interviews. The sample consisted of 100 teachers from preschool, primary and junior secondary schools from the urban zone in the three Education District in the Department of El Huila.

The Interview was semi-structured and applied to all teachers in the sample. Both the interviews and the survey addressed three topics : (a) teachers' self-image, (b) teachers' daily work, and (c) training-related factors. Among the latter, the study attempted to identify teachers' understanding and definitions of the Microcenters as a strategy to improve educational quality through teacher training, as well as their failures and achievements, and teachers' suggestions to improve them. Also explored were some conditions of teacher group work, such as levels of participation, the role of the Microcenter coordinator, the reflection process conducted by the group, the relevance of the topics discussed, and the materials used at the Microcenters. In addition, on-site observation greatly widens the scope of the research.

The triad of survey-observation-interviews made it possible to conduct an analysis of the relationship between theory and practice in the development of the Microcenters, given that a specific purpose of the study was to detect inconsistencies and/or coincidences between what was *intended* and what was actually *occurring*.

Teachers' self-image

In Colombia the social image of the teaching profession has suffered important deteriorative changes over the last few years. The increasing urbanization process, the crisis in the training of teachers, the deterioration of educational quality, among others, have contributed to lowering the status of teachers. Labour struggles, the contractual character of teaching work, and the rapid and massive expansion of educational services have led to a view of teachers as common workers or wage earners, rather than as cultural workers or citizen builders.

Thus, the survey initially set out to investigate the views of teachers on themselves and on their profession. The range of answers confirmed that the traditional "apostle" image

"Traditional teacher training is based on a vertical advisor-student-teacher relationship, a simple, mechanical teaching-learning process that corresponds to the dictates of behaviorism. At the Microcenters it is possible to implement a new type of the service training, where the relationship becomes horizontal, experiences are shared, and both the advisor [Orientador] and the teacher teach and learn."

"Since [in the conventional in-service teacher training-scheme] it is mandatory to obtain credits to receive a promotion, the teacher will not pay attention to the course that best improves his or her work. Instead, teachers will take the first one they find even if it is useless to them. The important thing is to take the course and obtain the credit. The result is that what we get will never be applied, it is something that always remains up in the air."

was predominant and persistent (68%), followed by the "wage earner" (27.7%) and the "cultural worker" (10.3%). Many teachers defined themselves simply as "guides", "friends", "advisors", "trainers", or "instructors". This evinced the lack of reflection by teachers on their current image and status, and on the shifts in societal perceptions of such image and status.

Pre-school teachers provided the following definition : *"The Microcenter is a work team with a common interest: the child. This team gets together to work, plan and organize activities. Each member presents his/her experiences, and alternatives are discussed for working with children and the community. The Microcenter is a supporting and working group of teachers.*

A primary school teacher noted: *"I think that the Microcenter is a gathering of teachers who have a common interest: an interest in engaging in pedagogical reflection. We discuss the problems we have with the children in the classroom and the problems we confront with the community. In this way we exchange our experiences."*

One of the most popular union leaders in the Department of El Huila, and Director of the Center for Educational Studies and Research (CEID), said: *"I see the Microcenter as a collective workshop that facilitates the development of teaching inasmuch as the teacher experience is not only retrieved but is socially processed through the Microcenter."*

Teachers' understanding of the Microcenters

The survey and the interviews revealed that teachers had a good grasp of the concept of the Microcenter as a place for pedagogical reflection, where they can speak up and open their practice to public observation. However, teachers viewed the Microcenter not only as a venue for training but also as a tool for organizing school work. Both dimensions—learning, and horizontal cooperative work among teachers—mark a breakthrough in conventional teacher education and work practices, and an important step forward in the professional autonomy of teachers.

Another important aspect deals with how teachers perceive the differences between what they called *"traditional training"* and *"training through the Microcenters"*, with a clearly favourable preference for the latter. The survey revealed the following teacher perceptions :

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS

Traditional in-service training	In-service training through Microcenters
Centered on lecturing. Teachers's experience is not acknowledged.	Participatory and lively. Professional experience is valued as the main source for improved and continuous learning.
Courses are too theoretical.	Knowledge acquired at the Microcenter is put into practice.
Work is done is isolation.	Group work is fostered.
Attendance is for the purpose of acquiring credit	Credit is the result of a work of reflection and action.
Deficient evaluation and follow up.	Self-evaluation is fostered. Teachers are encouraged to generate new learning.

"In my experience, the team work at the Microcenter has improved the relationship among teachers and had stimulated a new pedagogical praxis, closer to the needs of the students. Sharing educational experiences makes teachers begin to understand that their work as educators is not simply to transmit knowledge. We are workers in the field of culture and have to go beyond the narrow limits of the school in order to assimilate the new knowledge that derives from direct contact with nature and society."

"People rely too much on somebody else. I was chosen because I had enough time to coordinate. One is single, no children, no husband. I accepted and feel good about it. But my colleagues don't want to replace me and I am getting tired."

Teachers group work at the Pedagogical Workshop

By stimulating an exchange of experiences the Microcenters imply group work and a cooperative relationship among teachers. However, forming groups of teachers and promoting collective reflection, discussion and exhchange is not an easy task given the traditional isolation and lack of such opportunities offered to teachers in the past. Successive education reforms and decentralization processes have increasingly individualized teachers.

This is precisely one of the dilemmas faced by the Microcenters. In order to explore gains and difficulties in this domain, teachers were asked to describe how the Microcenters were operating in each case

However, analyses by teachers who were interviewed and direct observations at some Microcenters revealed a major difficulty in such group work: the role of the coordinator in the working sessions. Once the group decides who is the most charismatic or the most qualified (or better able, for any other reason), there is no rotation. This generates dependency and leads inevitably to routine.

Difficulties and misconceptions

One of the most common misconceptions among technicians from the MEN and teachers was considering the Microcenters exclusively centered around Curricular Renewal. Moreover, direct observation revealed that the work at the Microcenters was focused on formal tasks, chiefly dividing and integrating units of the curriculum, and producing materials. Microcenters with over a year of operation had not surpassed this stage and had fallen into a set routine. There was a lack of attention to the collective reflection practice and teacher demotivation in several Microcenters.

Another difficulty identified by the study was the deep dependance of teachers on State educational agencies. If those institutions failed to deliver materials or advisors, the Microcenters did not take off by themselves. This situation was clearly an expression of a predominantly top-down school culture, where teachers developed no confidence in their own capacities and had lost their sense of initiative.

Clearly, the success of the Microcenters depends not only on the State but on the teachers themselves, on their willingness and capacity to change traditional attitudes, to understand that their professional learning must arise from their needs and interests, and that an improvement in education quality depends largely upon themselves.

Fostering of School Educational Projects

As stated earlier, a specific objective of the Microcenters is to encourage to develop an Educational Project for their respective schools. This project was expected to result from a research program which would lead the activities of the Microcenter for at least one year.

The study found that there was little clarity on these Educational Projects both among teachers and the MEN technicians. Many confused the Pedagogical Workshop with the Educational Project.

Traditionally, teacher training (both pre-and in-service) has not provided teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills for undertaking research. Critics of the Microcenters had argued that it was absurd to expect teachers to conduct research and to become teacher-researchers. However, research at the Microcenters was conceived not as academic research competing with universities and specialized institutions, but research on teachers' work and daily practice. Teacher research was defined as "*rigorous and systematic production of pedagogical knowledge generated by teachers, and aimed at critically analyzing their own practice towards transforming this knowledge into more efficient and democratic ways of teaching and learning.*"

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE MICROCENTER STRATEGY

The study revealed the following accomplishments of the Microcenters :

Increasing teacher awareness of the deficiencies of traditional training schemes An important accomplishment was teachers' awareness of the crisis of traditional teacher training and the possibility of alternative schemes. The Microcenters appeared as an alternative with which teachers were ready to experiment.

Recovering the school as a cultural environment for the community Some Microcenters that had focused on improvements in the area of Language had defined important cultural recuperation projects. Many meetings were attended by parents who shared their cultural traditions, poems, legends, songs and other cultural expressions.

The fact that training is provided *in situ* and teachers are not removed from their daily environment, facilitated the development of teacher creativity and autonomy. Although

"We have spent two years at a Microcenter. We took a course in March last year and then worked with the Curriculum Renewal. Little by little we adapted. We have learned to divide and integrate the units [of the curriculum] and this year the situation has changed. Through last years's experience it has been easier to handle the program."

"The main difficulty in the work of the Microcenters closely relates to the old traditions of the teaching practice that become obstacles when faced with the need for educational changes. Many teachers are reluctant to accept these changes and they would rather keep to their old habits; they are still dependent on prescribed programs. Another difficulty relates to the low level of general education of many teachers and their scant interest in permanent research." (Director of the CEID, El Huila section)

"I think that there are more positive features than obstacles in the forming of the Microcenters. Among the main ones are the possibility of unifying criteria, of integrating among ourselves, of communicating many things. One day a girl student finds an article in the newspaper about children's creativity, about child play, and we have an opportunity take this article to the Microcenter, read it, and draw conclusions that may be useful for us at a given moment. I want to highlight group work; we discuss freely and look for alternatives." (Teacher coordinator of a Microcenter at pre-school level).

there were teacher who expressed resistance to the Microcenter, many pointed out its advantages and potential.

SOME CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

Researchers concluded that if the misunderstandings and major obstacles can be overcome, the Microcenters have the potential of becoming a successful strategy at regional and national level, facilitating a change in teachers' roles and morale, and the building of an alternative pedagogy in the classrooms.

The study highlighted several conclusions, based on the analysis of the Microcenters conducted in the Department of El Huila :

- Teachers' image, as perceived by teachers, still reflected the archaic notions of the teacher as an *apostle.*
- A traditional absence of reflection on their daily school work prevented teachers from identifying deficiencies in their teaching practice, and their role in school failure. The excessive routinization and ritualization of the teaching practice prevented teachers from seeing the importance of pedagogical reflection at the Microcenters.
- Teachers in the Department of El Huila had little, partial and superficial information and understanding of the Curricular Renewal. Reflecting this, the work at the Microcenters was eminently focused on formal aspects of such Curricular Renewal, disregarding the study and analysis of its theoretical framework and the wide social debate held in the country on its nature and orientation.
- Group association and collaboration, essential to the effective functioning of the Microcenters, faced serious difficulties due to the secular isolation of the teacher's role.
- Lack of clarity on the role of the Microcenter had led to confusion between the *Pedagogical Workshop* and the *Educational Project.*
- Some teachers, head teachers and official displayed a bureaucratic understanding of the Microcenters, viewing them as places where they could fill out forms. Few had understood the integral role of the Microcenter as an environment for pedagogical reflection and knowledge.
- Due to misconceptions, teachers were not able to define clearly the role of the Microcenter coordinator.
- Evaluation was found to be the weakest point of the work at the Microcenters because it was approached in a mechanical and traditional way.
- The achievements of the Microcenters in the Department of El Huila were meaningful but it was not possible to state, at that point, that they were a success.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were proposed, within the framework of the educational reform in progress in the country :

- It is essential to overcome short-sighted views of the Microcenter and to consider it instead as a multifaceted strategy for teacher sharing, pedagogical reflection and discussion on a wide spectrum of issues related to their profession and the improvement of the school system.
- Administrative considerations must be avoided when approaching the Microcenters as a strategy for teachers pedagogical reflection and experimentation. The State's educational agencies must provide the Microcenters logistical support but provide them the conceptual and methodological autonomy that is essential for the development.

MICROCENTERS AND SCHOOL-CLUSTERING IN COLOMBIA

An important factor that needs to be considered, and one which facilitated the organization of the Microcenters in Colombia, is the process of school-clustering (*nuclearizacion)* that was institutionalized and began to be implemented countrywide back in 1982. Each nucleus is formed by 8 to 15 schools in both urban and rural areas. Each nucleus has an Advisory Committee integrated by community members, and a Technical-Pedagogical Committee comprising of teachers and headmasters. The grouping of 15 to 25 nuclei within a homogenous geographical area forms an Education District, which is the administrative cell at the zone level.

RURAL MICROCENTERS IN CHILE

The concept and the methodology of the Microcenters has also been adopted in Chile within the current Project to Improve Educational Quality and Equity (MECE), started in 1992, which covers rural multigrade schools. Teachers from two or more neighbouring schools meet once a month in one of the schools to share their experiences, prepare materials and teaching aids, and receive technical assistance from MECE's supervisors.

- Microcenters should intersperse horizontal encounters among teachers with high quality courses linked to their daily situation and needs, so as to enhance the conditions for improving reflection and transforming action.
- If the Microcenters are considered a viable alternative for fostering teacher empowerment, teachers' image should be a topic of specific discussion among teachers at the Pedagogical Workshop. This is a pre-condition for teacher awareness of the problems facing education and of the need to work collectively towards a more professional and autonomous role.
- Rotation in the co-ordination role at the Microcenters is a must. Technicians from the MEN should make this absolutely clear and orient teachers accordingly, providing them guidelines on the role of the coordinator (such as provoking participation rather than monopolizing expression, encouraging discussion and accepting different points of view rather than trying to reach hasty and superficial agreements, etc.)
- If teachers are expected to research their own pedagogical practice and elaborate educational projects for the schools, they need to be provided with basic conceptual and methodological tools. This is preceded by the need for addressing the training of trainers who can assist teachers in the elaboration and follow-up of such projects.
- The work at the Microcenters should be supported by the provision of texts and audio-visual materials. Microcenters tend to veer towards routine in the absence of such materials.
- The State educational bodies (such as the Ministry of Education and the Experimental Pilot Centers) must perceive the Microcenters as objects of research and permanent evaluation. Rigorous research is important to enable a better understanding of the processes and mechanisms involved in teacher education and professional improvement, if the Microcenters intend to become a true teacher training alternative.
- There is a need to strengthen the linkages between the Microcenters and universities and higher education institutions, particularly for research and training purposes. Linkages between universities and the teaching practice feeds the academic progress of the university, benefits teachers and their training, and acknowledges the protagonistic role of the community and civil society.
- It is necessary to stimulate inter-institutional efforts in order to pool resources for education reform, and for teacher training reform in particular.
- It must be acknowledged that substantive changes in teacher education strategies are not achieved by top-down rules but through a process that implies the spurring of new educational practices seeking teachers autonomy and identity, and an overall improvement in the quality of education.
- National teacher training policies must be backed by research and systematic evaluation in order to analyze their achievements and difficulties, and introduce timely and strategic correctives where necessary.

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The training plan was defined as.:

- **national :** For all. Addressed not only to the literacy educators but to the entire personnel of the campaign, from the national to the local level.
- **permanent :** Conducted both before and during the literacy process, in order to enable educators to continuously upgrade their knowledge and competencies, and to contrast theory with practice.
- **integral :** Including both the pedagogical and the social aspects of literacy teaching.
- **collective :** Promoting dialogue and exchange, the formation of study groups, reflection and discussion, both in the residential and in the distance modalities.
- **critical :** Rejecting passiveness and rote learning on the part of both teachers and learners. Aimed at developing, in both, the capacity to reason, to critically analyze and discuss that which is taught.
- **multiplying :** From a few to many, through to a pyramid strategy, in which each one shares with others what she or he has learned.
- **differentiated :** Each group according to its own needs, acknowledging the heterogeneity of educational agents and of tasks involved at various levels and in different situations.
- **flexible :** Each group according to its possibilities, allowing great flexibility in terms of content, modalities, approaches and calendars within the national training framework.

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THE TRAINING STRATEGY OF THE NATIONAL LITERACY CAMPAIGN "MONSIGNOR LEONIDAS PROANO"

Training is a particularly neglected, often outdated and tedious area within the adult literacy field. Seeking to overcome this traditional weakness, the literacy campaign described here placed central importance on the initial and on the job training and support of young literacy teachers and introduced several innovative aspects. A general background is provided, followed by a specific description of the training component.

BACKGROUND

The "Monsignor Leonidas Proano" National Literacy Campaign (1988-1990) was undertaken as a joint responsibility of the Ministries of the Social Front (Education, Social Welfare, Health, and Labour), and was coordinated by the Ministry of Education (MEC). Named after a renowned Ecuadorian Bishop and human rights advocate, the campaign aimed at contributing to a broad-based educational discussion in the country in order to change and revitalize the formal school system.

Two separate campaigns were undertaken, one for the Spanish-speaking population and one for the Quechua-speaking population. The latter campaign was designed and coordinated by the National Division of Intercultural Indigenous Bilingual Education, DINEIIB, created in 1988, and had its own calender, curricula, and training plan. Only the Spanish campaign will be described here.

Stages The campaign had three stages:

I.	Design, planning and organization	September 1988–April 1989
II.	Implementation	May-September 1989
III.	Systematization and final evaluation	September 1989-September-1990

Objectives: The campaign never made claims of "eradicating" illiteracy in the country, but of teaching as many people as possible to read and write, and to ensure a level of literacy that would enable them to continue learning on their own if they so desired. Strong emphasis was therefore placed on the pedagogical issues involved in literacy instruction. Learning achievement results revealed that over 80% of the students who completed the campaign were able to comprehensively read and write a personal letter to their literacy educator.

The objectives of the campaign were formulated as follows :

- To teach reading and writing to the largest possible number of illiterate and semi-literate youth and adults in the country;
- To educate secondary school students in Ecuador's social problems and provide them with an opportunity to be socially useful, by involving them as literacy teachers.
- To promote national information and awareness on human rights, including the right to education.
- To influence the regular school system through the active involvement of students, their teachers and parents in the campaign, and through the development and dissemination of new educational approaches and methods, particularly regarding literacy teaching.
- To initiate national discussion on the country's educational problems and encourage widespread social movement in favour of education reform

"At the beginning we heard about the literacy campaign but we had no idea what lay ahead of us. For many, it was an adventure. Then, we began to teach. We met at the Parish Meetings; we got to know each other better at the Zonal Meetings; now, at this Provincial Meeting we call each other by name. We are more than friends. We have learned a great deal from our adult students. Our faces are bright. Let us hope we will continue to be friends wherever we are in the future" (Provincial Meeting of Literacy Teachers, Ibarra, Imbabura, 08/06/89).

"This is an opportunity for young people like us to show that we can meet not only to go on strike but to analyze an important problem of our country such as the educational problem." (Provincial Meeting of Literacy Teachers, Ibarra, Imbabura, 08/06/89)

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Premises: The campaign was based on the following premises:

- Illiteracy is a structural problem which cannot be resolved by means of one single action. Reaching the literacy goal requires sustained actions linked to an integral national education policy that guarantees access, equality and quality in education.
- The illiteracy issue includes *functional illiteracy*. A literacy action must also deal with the latter.
- Human Rights provide a highly valuable and significant universal content for literacy instruction and for encouraging a democratic, critical and mobilizing education process. Human Rights provide also a common framework to the different topics dealt with in a literacy process, which are otherwise presented in a scattered and isolated manner.
- A massive literacy action can become a privileged tool to incite a broad-based national education movement capable of arousing awareness, critical reflection and national debate around education so as to impact on the formal education system, its agents, conceptions, methodologies and practices.
- Youth are a highly productive, untapped social force. A massive educational action such as a literacy campaign requires the mobilization of non-conventional social and teaching forces, and gives youth an invaluable forum for social participation, expression and learning.
- The role of the educator is the determining factor in the education process. Special attention must thus be given to the education and training of educators themselves through a permanent, systematic and integrated strategy that draws upon diverse modalities and means.

Literacy educators 72,753 educators participated in the Campaign, the majority of whom were students in their final years of high school. Student participation as literacy educators was established as a prerequisite for graduation, replacing the conventional thesis. The remainder comprised of rural teachers, volunteers, and adult educators from the Adult Education Division of the MEC. Literacy educators were organized in 3,230 brigades (teams of 15 to 30 students), both rural and urban. Brigades were coordinated by secondary school or university teachers.

A two-pronged training plan was designed for the literacy educators. Training lasted 8 months and featured both distance modalities (32 booklets that were produced and distributed weekly) and face-to-face modalities (one-week workshops organized around instructional videos especially prepared for the campaign).

In order to facilitate adult enrolment and learning, each secondary school involved in the campaign was instructed to form two types of brigades: some dedicated to literacy instruction, and others to providing support, such as taking care of young children while their parents—especially mothers—attended classes.

Literacy students The last (1982) population census estimated that there were 826,485 illiterates over 15 years of age out of an overall population of 10 million inhabitants (an official 13.9% illiteracy rate). A total of 350,000 literacy students, including children, youth and adults, were enrolled in rural and urban areas. As expected, although 12 years was established as the minimum age, many children under that age enrolled and many learned together with their parents. Literacy educators were instructed to organize separate groups for children, youth and adults whenever possible.

The campaign addressed the needs of both the illiterate and the semi-literate (with some school experience, but with weak reading and writing skills). Pedagogical orientations included peer-tutoring, with those with some school experience helping their less advanced classmates. Learning results of the campaign, however, showed

TESTIMONIALS
OF LITERACY EDUCATORS (SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS)

"At the beginning, we felt very insecure. It is not easy to accept that you are suddenly a teacher, when you have always been a student. Now we feel confident, capable of teaching. The Teacher's Guide is very easy, very concrete. It takes us by the hand to move ahead" (Ivan, Imbabura).

"We thought it was going to be difficult to teach reading and writing. But now we realize it is not that difficult, that we can do it. The method is easy. The Teachers's Guide helps us develop the class" (Pepe, Loja).

"We have demonstrated that we, the youth, are capable, just as Document No 3 told us. Modesty aside, we are good teachers. Better than many of our own teachers who only come, give a lecture, copy text onto the blackboard and dictate. We talk with our students for 15 minutes or half an hour before we start the class" (Rommel, Chimborazo).

no significant differences between those enrolled with some previous school experience and those with none. Thus, the campaign contributed to further underscore the low quality of learning in the regular school system.

Literacy sites 25,729 *circulos de Alfabetizacion Popular*-CAP (Popular Literacy Circles) were organized throughout the country in rural and urban areas. These CAPs operated in any available building (schools, churches, homes, community houses, etc) or in the open air.

*"The Working Documents have helped us a lot. We have managed to understand these booklets and to put them in practice. The one that served us most was number 19, **What one is NOT Supposed to Do in the Literacy Process.** Also useful was number 16-17.**The Literacy Educator as a Community Educator,** which oriented us towards getting to know the people we were going to work with"* (Blanca, Chimborazo).

Literacy content, pedagogy and materials Human Rights was adopted as the overall framework and content of the campaign. The 12 lessons of the primer *Nuestros Derechos* (Our Rights) were developed around the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—each lesson refers to one or a group of related human rights. The training of literacy educators also focused on Human Rights and encouraged them to compare rights against Ecuador's realities in the fields of health, nutrition, education, gender equality, free expression, and so on. Thus, the campaign constituted a learning experience and a practical exercise in human rights not only for illiterates but for the literacy educators and Ecuadorian society as a whole.

Approaches and methodologies proposed for literacy teaching incorporated updated trends in literacy instruction and acquisition, and benefitted from recent research in this field. The preparation of literacy materials was based on an analysis of a large sample of literacy materials previously produced and used in Ecuador and Latin America.

Literacy Implementation The literacy process lasted 4 months (May-September 1989). The Literacy Follow-Up Plan had two components: administrative and pedagogical. The following activities were included within the Pedagogical Follow-Up:

"I learned a lot through the Working Documents. For example, In Document N• 5, which contains the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, I myself learned about the right to asylum" (Ivan, Imbabura).

(a) meetings of literacy educators at the parish, zone and provincial level, culminating with a National Congress held in Quito at the end of the campaign (September 1989);

(b) meetings of brigade coordinators (secondary school teachers) at the provincial and national level; and

(c) national radio programme with pedagogical orientations which was broadcast nationally on weekends during the 4-months literacy period.

The campaign and education reform Capitalizing on the social dynamics brought about by a massive and intensive national undertaking such as this, the national literacy campaign was perceived as an education movement aimed at provoking critical reflection and extensive debate around the educational issue, beyond the confines of adult literacy and adult education. Thus:

"There are teachers who are imposing an old teaching method on us. We must rebel and show them that we, the young people, are able to teach well, without their help (Conclusion of the Zonal Meeting of Literacy Teachers, Quito, Pichincha, 08/05/89)

- the campaign was designed and implemented by the Ministry of Education (MEC), and involved Universities and NGOs related to the education issue throughout the country;
- secondary school students were the main literacy teaching force;
- secondary school teachers were the coordinators of the student brigades;
- all materials prepared for the campaign- including the training materials- were distributed to the entire MEC staff, primary schools, primary school teachers, and teacher associations;
- specific training plans were designed for each of the groups involved in the campagin:secondary school students,secondary school teachers and MEC staff at the local, intermediate and central level; and
- the campaign culminated with National Congress of the Literacy Educators, where

the secondary school students were asked to analyze the national education system and make proposals for change.

The evaluation of the campaign Two complementary evaluations were conducted : (a) an *internal evaluation*, from the perspective of the literacy *educators* (a final questionnaire was distributed to all literacy educators prior to the conclusion of the campaign); and (b) an *external evaluation*, from the perspective of the literacy *students*, centered around learning achievement (a literacy test was applied to 3,011 literacy students) and including an evaluation of impact at the community level (perceptions by local authorities such as priests and other community members).

"We feel very proud. Our group of students is very nice, very participative. It is great to teach them. We feel very happy to do so" (Lourdes, Azuay).

The results of both evaluations were published separately and jointly, and were widely disseminated within and outside the country. Some significant results of the perceptions of the literacy educators:

- 95.3% of the literacy educators said that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should be adopted as the content for future literacy/education actions;
- 98.5% said that they had gained the confidence and affection of their students; 72.5% said they had received support from community leaders; and 66.6% said they had engaged in community work.

"I love this. I love to teach. I am happy with my students. They are sad to think that the campaign will soon be over. And I am, too" (Elsa, Guayas).

- 98.6% assessed their participation in the campaign as interesting or very interesting; 64.4% said that what they learned would be very useful to their own personal development; 90.7% said that the experience enabled them to learn a great deal about their own capabilities.
- 95.1% recommended that secondary school students be regularly involved in adult literacy programmes and campaigns.

Costs The cost of the (Spanish and Quechua) campaign was assumed by the Ecuadorian government and amounted a total of 3,107,891 sucres (500 sucres per US dollar at that time). International collaboration came from AECI (Spain Cooperation Agency), ICI, UNDP, UNESCO, and UNICEF.

Some notable tensions and obstacles

"The Working Documents are perfect, they have been of great help to us. I especially liked the Social Series. The one that made the greatest impact on me was number 26, ***What is the Situation of Women in Ecuador ?*** *I am against machismo, I have always been. Our adult students were made aware of machismo while studying lesson 9, on the right to equal rights for men and women. Our women students realized there is machismo in their neighbourhoods, in their own homes. I made them see that machismo is not only in men's heads but in women's heads as well. I learned that in Document number 26, Before that, I had never thought of it" (Ana, Guayas).*

- The argument that priority should be given to the education of children over adult education.
- The defense of a professional teaching certificate as pre-requisite for teaching and, as a corollary, the lack of confidence on young secondary school students as being apt for this task.
- The lack of updated, consistent and reliable statistical data on the situation of education in general, and on adult literacy in particular.
- The eminently quantitative concerns of politicians, educational authorities and the media: the main concern (and criterion to evaluate the campaign) was *how many* and *how much* (enrolment, literacy rates, costs, etc) with little attention to process, quality and effective learning.
- The resistance to innovation not only within the education sector but in families and society at large.
- Mutual resistance between State, NGOs, and community organizations, which hindered progress and co-ordination.

Conclusion The 1988-1990 Ecuadorian literacy campaign showed that this type of action—massive, with broad-based social participation and focused on the mobilization of youth—is possible and proves socially productive in conditions other than revolutionary processes, traditionally viewed as prototypes for such endeavors.

In 1989, the literacy educators of the campaign received the Latin American Human Rights Award granted by the Latin American Association for Human Rights (ALDHU). In 1990, the campaign was selected by UNESCO as one of five adult literacy expriences to be presented at a special panel during the "World Conference on Education for All" in Jomtien, Thailand.

The campaign was continued through a regular Adult Basic Education (ABE) programme equivalent to primary education.

"The campaign has helped me to discover my vocation. I like being a teacher. I discovered that I have patience. El expected this to be very difficult, but it is easy in reality. Maybe it is easy because I enjoy teaching, but what helps most is that my students enjoy learning and are eager to learn. In sum: I have decided to become a teacher" (Catalina, Guayas).

THE TRAINING PLAN OF THE LITERACY EDUCATORS

Weaknesses of teacher training within the adult literacy field

The concept and design of the campaign were based on a critical analysis of literacy experiences conducted in Ecuador and other developing countries. The campaign aimed at overcoming weaknesses habitually found in such experiences, particularly in two areas; training and evaluation.

Training was viewed as key to the campaign success, indispensable not only for the literacy educators but for the entire MEC structure and campaign staff at the national, provincial and local level. Specially, the training strategy aimed at reversing some of the problems and narrow approaches that have characterized the conventional training model within the adult literacy field (see box).

"The campaign has served us to learn about the real problems of our country. We have learned what poverty is like. Coming to the countryside on a picnic is not the same as getting in contact with the people and getting to know how they live" (Fernando, Carchi).

Some training premises of the campaign

- It s not enough to know something in order to be able to teach it to others. *Learning to teach* is essential.
- Adult education, and adult literacy in particular, is a specific area within the education field, and necessitates specific knowledge and competencies.
- It is not enough to be a teacher in order to be able to teach adults to read and write. Certified teachers, trained to teach children, need to learn how to teach adults.
- The adult education field is in continuous change. Much relevant knowledge has been produced over the last three decades, outdated knowledge has been rectified, new theoretical proposals have emerged, empirical experience has been gained. The adults of today are different from those of the mid-1900s. The social, political, economical and specifically educational realities of the world, and of each country in particular, have undergone major changes. All these factors make it essential to upgrade and rejuvenate the knowledge accumulated within the field.

Preparing good literacy teachers requires:

- understanding training as a process, going beyond the single, initial, isolated event;
- overcoming the bent for "methods" and "techniques" that predominate in the field, aiming at an integral approach—pedagogical and social, theoretical and practical—thus avoiding the repetition of well-known cliches in the field of literacy;
- overcoming the tendency to replicate "models", seeking and identifying the specific conditions of each programme, its organization, means, contents and methodologies;

"We have met wonderful people who have given us their love, who have received us with open arms" (Roberto, Carchi)

- stimulating self-study and continuous education and training, linked to the needs that emerge from practice; and
- making pedagogical practice a source and tool for continuous learning.

THE CONVENTIONAL TRAINING MODEL OF ADULT LITERACY ACTIONS

- *Neglect of the training component* within an overall neglect of the human resources involved at different levels. More emphasis is placed on material inputs and educational technology than on capacity building and teaching learning conditions. It is assumed that teaching reading and writing (to both adults and children) is fairly simple task, not requiring specific knowledge or skills.
- *Short and a systematic training efforts,* usually reduced to a lone event—a short workshop or seminar—in the absence of a strategic and systematic training plan. Training is typically offered before the literacy programme begins, with little or no attention to continuous on the job support and upgrading.
- *An instrumental and narrow approach to training.* Training is centered around a particular literacy "method" or a specific primer or manual, with little attention paid to the understanding of literacy pedagogy, the students, and the context, Moreover, so-called literacy "methods" are often not methods at all, and replicate conventional child literacy instruction in schools. Both learners and teachers' materials tend to be rigid and prescriptive, following a given sequence of steps. The teacher's guide or manual is meant to compensate for the weaknesses of the teachers' profile and the training programme.
- *Neglect of pedagogical aspects in favour of administrative ones.* Training habitually devotes more importance and time to administrative rather than pedagogical issues related to the literacy programme.
- *Neglect of pedagogical aspects in favour of broader "sociological" ones.* In progressive programmes, particularly those inspired by Paulo Freire's ideas—awareness-building, "dialogue" on aspects of learners' reality, etc—it is common to find that the social, ideological, cultural and ideological dimensions of illiteracy and literacy overshadow the specific pedagogic dimensions of teaching and learning to read and write.
- *Little linkage with practice.* Despite common rhetoric to the contrary, training stems from a priori definitions on training and on training learning needs regarding both content and pedagogy.
- *Homogeneous and model-oriented training.* The training curriculum and the administration and organization of training programmes within the adult literacy field are very similar around the world. They tend to replicate conventional patterns and models, without an analysis of the specific conditions, objectives and agents involved in the training programme.
- *Lack of systematization and evaluation of the training programme,* which typically remains undocumented and unanalyzed in its results and impact on trainees and on learners. If evaluated, results are not incorporated into improving further training or sharing lessons learned with others.
- *Lack of innovation* Training in adult literacy programmes remains essentially tied to the ancient wisdom generated within the adult literacy field and lacks contact with the new knowledge produced both within and outside the field.
- *Training centered around written materials and print,* including the material for the learner (a primer, a reading book) and the manual or guide for the teacher. There is little exploration of other training strategies including audio and visual materials.
- *Residential training provides the prototype,* with little exploration and development of distance learning possibilities.

"It was hard becoming teachers overnight. At the beginning, we were afraid, full of mistrust. Our students would not want to speak. Only we, the literacy teachers, would speak (Eliana, Carchi).

"The campaign was a very interesting experience for me. Everyone learned from every one, and at the end the results were quite satisfactory because the majority, 80% of our students, learned to read and write" (Carmen, Carchi).

"My participation in the National Literacy Campaign was very interesting. It was my first teaching experience, and, worked with students who were much older than myself. At the begining it was hard, but little by little I adapted to the difficult task of being a teacher" (Laura, Carchi)

THE TRAINING PLAN OF THE CAMPAIGN

The training plan, under the responsibility of the Pedagogical Direction of the campaign, lasted 8 months and combined distance and face-to-face modalities. Training was initiated 5 months prior to the commencement of the literacy process, and continued throughout the literacy process, until the closure of the campaign.

"This was a rewarding experience for me. I learned to share a part of what my primary and secondary school teachers have taught me in school" (Anita. Carchi).

Characteristics of the training plan

The training plan was defined as :

- **national :** For all. Addressed not only to the literacy educators but to the entire personnel of the campaign, from the national to the local level.
- **permanent :** Conducted both before and during the literacy process, in order to enable educators to continuously upgrade their knowledge and competencies, and to contrast theory with practice.
- **integral :** Including both the pedagogical and the social aspects of literacy teaching.
- **collective :** Promoting dialogue and exchange, the formation of study groups, reflection and discussion, both in the residential and in the distance modalities.
- **critical :** Rejecting passiveness and rote learning on the part of both teachers and learners. Aimed at developing, in both, the capacity to reason, to critically analyze and discuss that which is taught.

"At the beginning we were afraid that our students would say that they did not want young students to teach them. After some time the fear was gone and my students got along very well with all of us. Many trusted us and told us about their lives." (Alejandra Carchi).

- **multiplying :** From a few to many, through to a pyramid strategy, in which each one shares with others what she or he has learned.
- **differentiated :** Each group according to its own needs, acknowledging the heterogeneity of educational agents and of tasks involved at various levels and in different situations.
- **flexible :** Each group according to its possibilities, allowing great flexibility in terms of content, modalities, approaches and calendars within the national training framework.

A. THE DISTANCE MODALITY

The **distance** modality was implemented through (a) a collection of weekly *Working Documents* (32 booklets), and (b) a radio programme with pedagogical orientations.

The Working Documents

"I will never forget this literacy campaign because I learned here about the reality of my country and I gained many important experiences that will stay with me through life" (Ruth, Carchi)

32 Working Documents were produced and distributed weekly throughout the country for 8 months, with a circulation of 200,000. Specially designed plastic bags were distributed so that the booklets could be easily collected and carried along.

The distribution of such booklets started 5 months prior to the literacy period. They played an important role in information and in addressing key questions about the campaign among future literacy educators. They provided them with basic knowledge and tools to prepare themselves for the challenge ahead: contact with an unknown community, the reality of poverty and illiteracy, the psychology of an adult learner, the pedagogy of literacy. As evaluated by literacy educators, these booklets helped them gain confidence in themselves and reduced the anxieties nurtured by their families and society at large who believed that young students, non-certified teachers, would not be able to teach.

THE LITERACY EDUCATORS' LIBRARY (32 WORKING DOCUMENTS)

DOCUMENT	SERIES	TITLE
1	Information	General Guidelines on the Campaign
2	Information	Learning to Teach: The Training of the Literacy Educators of the Campaign
3	Information	Can Young Students Teach Reading and Writing ?
4	History of Literacy	The UNP-LAE Literacy Campaign (1944-1961)
5	Social	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
6	Pedagogical	The Educational Conception of the Campaign
7	Monsignor Proano	Monsignor Proano : His Message Through Anecdotes
8	History of Literacy	The State Assumes Responsibility for literacy : The 1963-1972 Literacy Programme
9	Pedagogical	The Teaching and Learning Materials of the Campaign
10	Monsignor Proano	Monsignor Proano and Literacy: The Popular Radiofonic Schools (ERPE)
11-12	Pedagogical	The Learning and Teaching of the Written Language
13	History of Literacy	The Functional Literacy Pilot Project (1967-1972)
14	Pedagogical	The Qualities of the Educator (Paulo Freire)
15	Social	What is the Situation of Housing in Ecuador ?
16-17	Pedagogical	The Literacy Educator as a Community Educator
18	Social	What is the Situation of Indigenous Nationalities in Ecuador?
19	Pedagogical	What One is NOT Supposed to Do in the Literacy Process
20	Monsignor Proano	Being Young (Monsignor Leonidas Proano)
21	Social	What Happens With the Situation of the Environment in Ecuador ?
22-23	Information	National Literacy Follow-Up Plan (May-September 1989)
24	Social	What is the Situation of Health in Ecuador ?
25	Social	What is the Situation of Children in Ecuador ?
26	Social	What is the Situation of Women in Ecuador ?
27	Social	What is the situation of Education in Ecuador ?
28-29	Pedagogical	In Levity and Seriousness: Reviewing our Education
30-31	History of Literacy	The National Literacy Programme "Jaime Roldos Aguilera" (1980-1984)
32	Social	What is the Situation of the Land in Ecuador ?

"The campaign was a relief, after so many years of study at school. It was a relief rather than a burden" (Luis, Pichincha).

"It was very difficult. But we did it. Nobody trusted us, not even our teachers and the authorities at our school. They said we could not teach adults to read and write because we are irresponsible youth. They were convinced we could not do it. But we hit them in the eye. Now we feel satisfied because we accomplished the goal that was put before us" (Victor, Pichincha).

The Working Documents were conceived as materials for group work. The last page of each booklet contained a specific *Guide for Group Work* which included a number of questions aimed at provoking group reflection and analysis. Secondary schools were asked to devote two hours per week to have students (future literacy educators) study and work on the week's document together with their classmates and the teacher appointed as brigade coordinator.

Acknowledging the poor reading habits of young students in the country, and of the literate population in general, the Working Documents were short (between 16 and 24 pages) and special attention was given to the language used and the graphic design (illustrated with photographs, drawings and cartoons). In a way, such materials were meant as a literacy plan for the literacy teachers themselves. An intermediate evaluation of the use of these materials, conducted halfway into the campaign, confirmed the low literacy levels and poor reading habits of the future school graduates.

These booklets included five different thematic series, each identified with a specific color (see detail in box):

1. *Information About the Campaign* (5 booklets): This series provided general guidelines on the campaign, and on its development.

TESTIMONIALS
OF LITERACY BRIGADE COORDINATORS (REGULAR SCHOOL TEACHERS)

Teachers and brigade coordinators at the "Tumbaco" National School (Tumbaco, Pichincha)

"We very much liked the Working Document number 28-29. As the title states, In Levity and Seriousness: Reviewing Our Education, our educational reality is presented as it is, using some very good cartoons. We studied and analyzed this document together with our students while they were teaching."

"We have talked with our students about the mistakes we, teachers, have made.

Unfortunately, we have been educated and trained this way."

2. *The Thinking of Monsignor Leonidas Proano* (4 booklets): This series dwelt on the biography, ideas and work of the bishop after whom the campaign was named.

3. *The History of Literacy in Ecuador* (4 booklets): A systematic account was provided on the various literacy actions undertaken in the country since 1944, when the first literacy campaign was held. The series was based on interviews.

4. *The Pedagogical Dimension of Literacy* (10 booklets): This series offered pedagogical knowledge related to the field of literacy in general, and of adult literacy in particular. One booklet featured the problems of Ecuador's education system and was entirely based on cartoons.

5. *The Social Dimension of Literacy* (9 booklets): This series began with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, followed by an analysis of rights implementation in the country in various areas: education, health, housing, equal rights between men and women, free expression, etc.

A weekly radio programme A radio programme with pedagogical orientation was broadcast for the literacy educators on Saturdays, and repeated on Sundays, throughout the literacy process.

B. THE FACE-TO-FACE MODALITY

The residential modality was implemented through two mechanisms: (a) a one-week workshop before the start of the campaign, and (b) weekly meetings of literacy educators throughout the literacy period.

THE FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING PLAN

PEDAGOGICAL DIRECTION OF THE CAMPAIGN

WORKSHOP 1
(Quito, January)
Provincial directors and national supervisors of the regular school system

WORKSHOP 2
(Provinces, January)
Provincial supervisors of the regular school system

Workshop 3	Workshop 4	Workshop 5
(Quito, Feb-March)	(Quito, March)	(Provinces, March-April)
Provincial directors and Provincial pedagogical teams	Selected secondary and normal school teachers	District Directors and district pedagogical teams

Workshop 6	Workshop 7
(Provinces, April)	(Quito, April)
Secondary school teachers at the provinces level	Promoters of workers and community organizations

WORKSHOPS FOR LITERACY EDUCATORS
(throughout the country, April-May)

In each provincial or district of the campaign Regular staff of the Adult Education Department of MEC Volunteers	In each secondary or normal school Students	In each organization Promoters of workers' and community organizations

The training workshops

Face-to-face training focused on the pedagogical issues of literacy teaching. It followed a cascade approach, with a multiplier mechanism at national, provincial and local levels, and conducted with the workshops for the literacy educators (*see graph).*

Videos for the training workshops In order to avoid typical problems associated with multiplier or "cascade" approaches, four videos were prepared by the Pedagogical Division of the campaign for use in these workshops. The videos were accompanied by a brief *Video Orientation Guide.* As with the *Working Documents,* the videos proposed a group use methodology, promoting group reflection and analysis. Each campaign office at provincial level was provided a betamax unit.

"In the Document number 28-29 there is a cartoon that made an impact on us: the one that shows the teacher with a big mouth and the students with big ears. This is the truth. Students participate very little in class. It is the teacher who speaks all the time, who says everything."

Four lines training Four different lines of training were organized, acknowledging the specific nature of four groups with different roles within the campaign:

a) MEC staff linked to the National Division of Regular and Special Education, including National Supervisors (who would be integrated in information and organizational/administrative follow-up tasks) and Provincial Education Directors (who would be part of the Provincial Executive Committees of the Campaign);

(b) MEC staff linked to the Division of Adult Education–DINEPP, who would be the Provincial and District Pedagogical Directors of the campaign;

c) secondary school teachers, who would integrate the School Literacy Committees and would be Coordinators of the Student Literacy Brigades; and

d) promoters and leaders of community organizations, who would conduct the literacy campaign within their own organizations.

A specific agenda was drawn-up for each line and for each level of training.

Workshops for literacy educators The entire training plan culminated in the workshops for literacy educators. These were facilitated by pedagogical teams at the provincial and zone levels, aided by the videos. Workshops were held at various places: campaign offices, secondary schools, communal houses etc.

"The campaign has helped us to develop ourselves as teachers, to become aware of our weaknesses, to re-think."

Two alternative calendar options were offered: modality A, with one full week of training, and modality B, consisting of five consecutive Saturdays. Workshop calendars also differed for the four regions in the country: Coast (between end of March and first week of April); Highlands: the Amazon Region; and Galapagos (between April and May).

Weekly meetings

Throughout the literacy teaching-learning process and as part of the follow up of the campaign, meetings between student educators were promoted at the parish, zone and provincial levels. These concluded with the National Congress of Literacy Educators, held in Quito after the conclusion of the campaign. Nearly 1,000 student-teachers from the entire country attended as delegates of their respective brigades.

Weekly meetings were also promoted among teachers who coordinated the brigades, culminating with meetings at the provincial and national levels.

"It would be very good if all subjects in the school curriculum were to have Working Documents such as these prepared by the literacy campaign. Students and teachers could work and advance together, mutually enrich each other."

Evaluation of the training plan of the campaign

A few weeks before the conclusion of the literacy process, a National Evaluation Questionnaire was distributed to all literacy educators, to be completed before they ended their assignment. The survey sought information on all aspects of the campaign, on the personal experience of the literacy educators and on their learners. A specific

section was devoted to the training plan. The following is a summary of the conclusions of this evaluation on the implementation of the training plan.

Training workshops

- 93.3% of the literacy educators participated in the workshops organized by the campaign;
- 21.3% considered the workshop excellent, 45.9% very good, 27.9% good, 4.0% fair, and 0.9% poor;
- 40.9% considered the workshop to be very useful, 56.4% useful and 2.7% useless.

Videos

- 69.7% utilized the videos in their workshop.

Working Documents

- received: 81.7% received all 32 Working Documents.
- *read:* 22% and of them; 25.9% read between 20 and 29; 32.5% between 10 and 19; 15.5% between 1 and 9; and 4.2% none (students from religious schools had a slightly higher average and private schools the lowest).
- *impact on literacy learning achievement:* There was a direct relationship between the number of documents read by the literacy educators and the literacy levels of their students. Literacy educators who read no documents placed 43.3% of their students in the "fair" achievement level. Those who read 30 documents or more placed 77.9% of their students in that level.
- *general opinion:* 17.8% considered the Working Documents excellent, 50.4% very good, 27.9% good, 3.6% fair, and 0.3% poor. 30.8% considered they were very useful, 65.5% useful, and 3.6% useless to their teaching task. Educators who found them the most useful came from public schools, and were located in the Amazon region, the most isolated region in the country.

  The Pedagogical Series was considered most useful. The least popular series among literacy teachers was the Series on History of Literacy in Ecuador.

  The series on Monsignor Leonidas Proano was considered the most interesting, and the series on History of Literacy elicited the least interest.

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Teachers and brigade coordinators at the "Los Pinos" School (Quito, Pichincha)

"This campaign has been a wonderful experience for me. I am a first grade teacher. This is the first time I have worked with young secondary school students. These girls were my students in first grade and I have been happy to see them teach the way they have. They have learned to value the job of a teacher. They were telling me the other day that they can now appreciate and admire the patience with which I taught them to read and write."

"The girls discovered their own qualities in this campaign. This experience has changed them integrally. They learned to share with others. They matured very quickly over the past few months. Unfortunately, now that they have matured, that they have learned to share, they will leave the school. If this experience is repeated, I would suggest that it is done not with the students of the last year of secondary school, but with those of the prior year, so that they can incorporate this experience in their school life."

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All classrooms visited had picture on the walls and learning aids were available. There was variation in the quality of the materials and their presentation; in some rooms, materials were well-selected and displayed, in others the effect was enthusiastic but jumbled. However, the overall atmosphere was welcoming and child-friendly. Hanging decorations and pictures indicated teachers attempts to make the rooms attractive. The children's conduct was lively; even in the least-developed classrooms the children were animated, interested and eager to contribute. Teachers showed considerable skill in presentation. Questions allowed children to respond with more than one-word answers, and teachers moved from entire class to individual interactions.

unicef Teachers Make The Difference UNESCO

LAO POPULAR DEMOCRACTIC REPUBLIC

NETWORK FOR TEACHING UPGRADING CENTRES (NTUC)

OVERVIEW

An education sector study completed in 1989/90 in the Lao Popular DemocraticRepublic identified teacher qualifications and competencies as a major problem in the primary school system. A high proportion of primary teachers (35% nationwide) had none or incomplete training, and some had only completed primary education themselves.

Student survival rate through the five grades was particularly low in rural and remote districts of the country, and the most serious losses occurred in the first three grades, where there is a concentration of untrained and unqualified teachers. Additionally, there was no cohesive system of school supervision and inspection throughout the education system.

In order to increase enrolment, retention and quality, a greater number of schools were needed together with trained teachers to teach the early grades; a relevant curriculum; essential and attractive books, work materials, and teaching aids; and effective supervision and quality control.

Proposals put forth by the Ministry of Education (MOE) to the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank included major reforms in curriculum development, textbook production, teacher development, improvements in education planning, education management and information, and school construction. Examining its own role in identifying how best to utilise its resources to assist in Lao's education effort and to avoid overlapping of functions, UNICEF decided to concentrate its resources in the early grades of primary school and on those children who are most disadvantages in terms of basic education.

Thus, in 1991, the Government of Lao PDR and UNICEF agreed to a five-year cooperative programme (1992-1996) on basic education which initiated a concentrated thrust of educational development in 8 rural and minority districts of 8 provinces where educational access and quality were particularly low, as revealed by a school mapping exercise conducted by UNICEF and MOE in that same year. A major feature of this programme is the *Network for Teacher Upgrading Centres* (NTUC) Project aimed at upgrading the teaching competencies of the untrained and unqualified teachers who form the majority of teaching corps in these districts. A corollary component of this project is the *Basic Education for Rural/Minority Children* Project which aims at improving school learning conditions by ensuring that schools are equipped with basic learning materials and an environment at least moderately adequate for children to study.

The NTUC project includes the following elements:

- an in-service training system to improve the quality of teacher education of untrained/unqualified teachers in 19 rural/minority districts;
- training manuals and resource materials for trainers and trainees in the Lao language;
- a supervision and monitoring system to ensure that teacher educators and trainers perform their tasks;
- basic water and sanitation facilities provided to Teacher Upgrading Centres and improvement of the physical conditions of selected schools where the teachers work;
- linkages between the teacher upgrading centres, the schools, and the communities, and

"We were very worried when we started the course, but now we know we can teach the new way, and we enjoy it".

"We have to do it to for the children's future."

"The training makes teaching easier".

"It's more fun to teach now. Things run smoother when the children enjoy it."

"If children can handle things, they learn better."

"Discussion helps children to understand".

"At the beginning, the children used to take the things. Now they understand why they are important and we can safely leave them."

- ownership of the project by the government.

The term *network* distinguishes the project from the more formal institutional concept of a "teacher training college", and indicates (a) a flexible linking of the 8 centres, each one serving a particular geographic area with its own characteristics and ethnic groupings; (b) cooperation and communication between the various centres; and (c) room for variation and flexibility in implementation to suit local conditions.

The training course consists of 24 weeks of residential work and extensive in-school exercises over a period of three years. It is supported by training modules on Foundation Studies, Applied Curriculum Studies, Advanced Studies and Supplementary Modules.

In October 1995, after four years of implementation, an evaluation of the NTUC Project was conducted. The evaluation process included a review of key documents related to the project; discussions with UNICEF staff and key MOE officials; meetings with key NGOs and partners; and field visits to three districts where the project is implemented. The evaluation aimed at assessing :

(a) the overall utility and effectiveness of the strategies and complementarity of the NTUC project in relation to the Lao Government's National Programme on Basic Education;

(b) the usefulness and appropriateness of the training materials and methodologies and time-frame of the training programme;

(c) the impact of the project in terms of capacity building of teacher trainers/supervisors, local supervisors, and school heads;

(d) the impact of the project on developing classroom teaching competencies of the untrained teachers: classroom management, lesson planning, and teaching methodologies.

(e) the impact of the project on student performance: enrolment, attendance, retention, and gender gaps;

(f) the effectiveness of the supervision/pedagogical support system developed and implemented in the project;

(g) the support to school learning conditions: learning materials and supplies provided to schools, school upgrading, school water and sanitation, and community/parental mobilisation; and

(h) UNICEF-NGO cooperation strategies and effectiveness.

The evaluation aimed at arriving at recommendations for improved strategies for delivery of Basic Education for All.

The major recommendations made by the evaluation team were:

- The NTUC project should be continued with certain modifications;
- the training modules should be further revised and certain modules re-written;
- the linkages between education and health should be further encouraged; and
- the linkages between the school parents and the community should be further strengthened.

The evaluation team comprised of 3 external evaluators and 6 representatives from the project's main donor/NGO partners based in Vientiane. External evaluators included: S. Shaeffer, Regional Education Adviser, UNICEF EAPRO (Bangkok): E. Furniss, Senior Programme Officer Education & Women's Development, UNICEF Hanoi; and V. Emblen, Primary Education Specialist, University of North London, United Kingdom, Evaluators from donor agencies/NGO partners in Vientiane included: D. Henry, Second Secretary, Australian Embassy (responsible for AUSAID Programmes); J. Archer, Programme Officer (HRD), Australian Embassy; M. Phoumavong, Project Assistant (HRD), Australian Embassy W. Dangers, Representative, Church World Service (CWS); Ms. Nilamay, Project Officer, Church World Service (CWS); and M. Huchesson, Australia Committee for UNICEF.

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STRUCTURE OF THE TEACHER UPGRADING COURSE

FOUNDATION STUDIES	
Residential School	6 weeks
In School Exercise	4 months
Residential School	3 weeks
In-School Exercises	4 months
APPLIED CURRICULUM STUDIES	
Residential School	6 weeks
In-School Exercises	4 months
Residential School	3 weeks
In School Exercises	4 months
ADVANCED STUDIES	
Residential School	6 weeks

CONTENTS OF TRAINING MODULES

YEAR 1: FOUNDATION STUDIES

Pupil-Teacher Relationships
Module 1: Personal relationships
Module 2: Actions to make people feel good about themselves
Class Management and Control
Module 3: Preventing control problems
Module 4: Punishment and behaviour
Relationship Skills
Module 5: The pupil as an individual learner
Module 6: Working with one pupil
Module 7: Working with the whole class
Class Management Skills
Module 8: The importance of time in the classroom
Module 9: Time management skills
Module 10: Whole class organisation; small group organisation.
Module 11: Classroom decision-making
Planning
Module 12: How to plan; learning objectives
Module 13: Lesson plans
Instructional Skills
Module 14: Clear communication (1)
Module 15: Beginning a lesson; ending a lesson
Module 16: Questioning and responding
Module 17: Activities which pupils do
Module 18: Clear communication (2)
Module 19: How to use discussion with a class
Teaching Strategies
Module 20: Drill strategy; exposition strategy
Module 21: Demonstration strategy; concept strategy
Module 22: Group discussion; guided-discovery
Educational Psychology
Module 23: Stages in mental development
Module 24: The primary school years
Module 25: Intelligence

SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TEACHER UPGRADING PROJECT

Goals and objectives : The overall goal of the NTUC project is to reduce the high failure and drop-out rates of rural and ethnic minority children in primary schools in 8 project areas, through:

- reducing the proportion of untrained and unqualified teachers in primary schools in the project areas to less than 10% (by training 3,200 teachers by 1996);
- creating a team of primary teacher educators (96) with specific skills in the upgrading of untrained teachers in rural and ethnic minority areas, to conduct training in pedagogy and in the production of training materials;
- preparing and producing training manuals and resource materials in Lao language for trainers and trainees;
- upgrading the facilities of NTUCs, providing office supplies/equipment and establishing libraries;
- upgrading selected community schools and providing basic school supplies and reading materials;
- linking community schools with in-classroom guidance and assistance with self-learning modules; and
- providing project management, administration and monitoring support.

Training process, content and structure The NTUC Project has the following features:

- ***on-site teacher training :*** a key feature of the project is that it trains teachers without withdrawing them from schools, linking training with immediate in-classroom application.
- ***training of trainers:*** trainers based at the teacher upgrading centres are trained through intensive workshops (4 weeks/year) in the teaching of the new teacher upgrading curriculum, methods of supervision and evaluation, and aspects of community mobilisation;
- ***residential summer schools and winter workshops:*** these are conducted at the NTU centres during school vacations (24 weeks over 3 years);
- ***distance learning study/assignments (in-school activities) :*** they are aimed at advancing students' self-learning skills between residential courses;
- ***assistance with modules and in-classroom guidance:*** during school terms students are visited by members of the NTU centre training team; and
- ***close working relationship between trainers, school headteachers and community leaders:*** the purpose is to ensure maximum support for in-classroom application of teaching methods learnt during the course.

TRAINING MODULES

The NTUC Project is structured around four core areas: Foundation Studies. Applied Curriculum, Advanced Studies, and Supplementary modules. Two Australian educationists funded by AUSAID provided technical assistance to the development of training modules, in consultation with a committee comprising of minisiterial level officials and teacher trainers. The consultants developed the first draft of the modules in English; these were reviewed by the committee and then translated into Lao. The first draft of the Lao version of the modules was used on a trial basis for one year. The draft modules and in-school exercises were subsequently revised based on feedback from both trainers and trainees, prior to printing.

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Other project components Besides teacher training, the project ensures several materials and supplies to the schools where the teacher trainees work. During the 1994/ 1995 schools year, 700 schools were provided with:

textbooks Textbooks have been provided for establishment of textbook rental schemes. New Grade 1 and Grade 2 books under the new curriculum have been supplied through the World Bank Project;

library book cases and library books 814 library cases with approximately 120 titles of Lao language books have been distributed for use by teachers and children;

toshaban Each project school has received a toshaban— a manual silk-screen printer set—provided by the Japan Sotosho Relief Committee (JSRC);

stationery and other supplies All teacher upgrading centres and target schools have received basic stationery and classroom supplies such as paper, colour pencils, alphabet charts, rulers, scissors, glue, and small blackboards;

office equipment Four computers and basic office equipment/supplies were provided to the Central Ministry to facilitate project management and implementation;

supplies for school upgrading and water and sanitation 174 schools were provided roofing sheets and roofing nails for school repair or reconstruction; 95 schools were assisted with construction of simple water systems; and 20 schools built toilets. Parents and communities provided labour, local materials, and cash support as local contributions for school upgrading and water and sanitation activities;

transport equipment The following vehicles have been provided by the project : 96 motorcycles (9 for provinces, 19 for districts, and 68 for upgrading centres) to facilitate teacher supervision; 80 bicycles for local supervisors to supervise the teachers in the satellite schools; and two vehicles to the Central Ministry for overall programme monitoring and supervision.

Co-operation with NGOs the project has developed working links particularly with three NGOs: Church World Service (CWS), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and Japan Sotoshu Relief Committee (JSRC), a Japanese NGO specialised in the production of teaching materials.

Funding The NTUC Project is funded by UNICEF. Total funding in 1992-1995 was US$ 1,350,300. Supplementary funds totalling US$ 945,000 were received from AUSAID and UNICEF Australia. Supplementary funds have also been received from UNICEF Japan and Japanese NGOs such as Rissho Kosei Kai, Japan International Organization, and Nichirenshu, UNICEF funds drawn from the Water and Sanitation (WES) Programme supported construction of school water and sanitation facilities.

Modifications introduced to the project At the end of the first year of implementation, and again in 1994-1995, modifications were introduced to the NTUC project based on feedback from the trainers and field observations by MOE and UNICEF field staff:

- a school cluster system (a central school and incomplete satellite schools) was proposed in order to further promote the cross-fertilisation of ideas and sharing of experiences between the trained and untrained teachers within school clusters.
- provincial and district level education staff were incorporated to the training workshops for trainers to ensure that both levels are involved in supervising the trainers and teachers at the centres and schools;

Module 26: Thinking
Module 27: Learning
Module 28: Memory
Module 29: Transfer and motivation
The Multi-grade School
Module 30: Strengths; organisation; the community

YEAR 2: APPLIED CURRICULUM

Module 1: Teaching of Primary Mathematics (Grade 1 to 5)
Module 2: Teaching of Primary Science (Grades 1 to 5)
Module 3: Teaching of Lao Language (Grades 1 to 5)
Module 4: Teaching of Social Science (Grade 1 to 5)
Module 5: Teaching of Health Education (Grade 1 to 5)
Module 6: Programming
Module 7: Suggestions for Supervisors Guide and Check List
Module 8: Assessment manual
Module 9: Assessment Guide of In-school Activities

YEAR 3: ADVANCED STUDIES

Module 1: Physical development
Module 2: Cognitive development
Module 3: Small group organisation
Module 4: Language development
Module 5: Evaluation, testing, record keeping
Module 6: Managing pupils behaviour

SUPPLEMENTARY MODULES

Module1: Organisation of multigrade school/classroom
Module 2: Teaching and organisation in the multi-grade school
Module 3: Education for girls: introduction for trainers
Module 4: The school and the community
Module 5: Principals of isolated rural schools
Module 6: Supervision; supervision notebook
Module 7: Measurement, evaluation, and progression through grades at the primary level
Module 8: Teacher Upgrading Course Evaluation Manual (for trainers/ supervisors)

- headteachers or senior teachers from the main schools (which are administratively responsible for satellite schools) were trained together with untrained teachers in order to introduce all of them to the new teaching methods and to use headteachers as a corps of "local supervisors" able to strengthen school management and school supervision. These modifications responded to the recognition that (a) it was necessary to strengthen the school management and supervision system to a greater extent than was originally anticipated in the project design, and (b) unless headteachers understand and share the new teaching methods themselves, they may not be supportive of the teachers in their upgrading programme;

- it was recommended that the project be expanded.

"Not just chalk and talk, Now the teachers teach much better"

"Not a doctor's theory, but a nurse's practice"

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS (1991-1995)

The evaluation conducted in 1995 identified the following achievements of the project.

Geographic coverage The NTUC project expanded from 8 districts in 8 provinces in 1992 to 19 districts in 9 provinces in 1995. The Project was also being implemented in a further 4 districts of 3 provinces with support from CWS and CRS.

Personnel development Between 1992 and 1995, the project trained, 2,425 persons of which 134 were trainers/supervisors at the province, district and Teacher Upgrading Centres level; 370 were local supervisors from schools or clusters; and 1,921 were untrained teachers. By the end of the 1996/97 school year another 600 persons will have been trained. This means that by 1996, over 90% of the untrained/unqualified teachers will have benefitted from the NTUC Project.

Training modules Training modules were produced for the 3 year course, and for the accompanying in-school activities for the teacher upgrading programme. Based on a UNICEF/MOE review of the programme in 1994, 8 supplementary modules were produced to supplement the Advanced Curriculum.

In Wapi District, teachers said that the most useful modules were those of the first year; the units on methodology, groups ogranisation, lesson planning and the use of materials were particularly important, especially in Mathematics and Lao language. If the duration of the course had to be shortened, they said: (i) they would leave out Psychology because they knew it already, could read it themselves and was not worth spending time on; and (ii) the whole of the third year is less important but some things would have to be moved to the first year, for example the supervisory role of the head, and multigrade teaching.

The Applied Curriculum modules were the most favourably received, perceived by teachers as practical and immediately applicable in the classroom. Teachers particularly appreciated the modules on teaching Reading and Mathematics, as well as on learning how to select, prepare and use appropriate materials for particular lessons. Teachers found the modules dealing with child development and language development and, in general, those modules that provide theoretical or conceptual inputs (Foundation Studies), to be more difficult. The challenge thus remains to help teachers understand the whys and the "big picture of teaching and learning".

Other learning materials

School books through a rental system Several teachers and members of parent associations commented on the usefulness of the textbook rental scheme. In this scheme students pay 100-300 *kip* to rent textbooks for the year, which are then returned for use by the next class. On an average, textbooks are expected to last for 3-5 years. However, the World Bank sponsored textbooks are showing signs of wear and tear, and specific measures need to be taken to protect these new books. In one school in Xieng Khouang, a teacher indicated that many children could not afford books even through the rental scheme.

Mobile libraries good use was made of the mobile libraries, but more books are needed. The way in which the mobile library was shared between formal and non-formal education centres seemed efficient.

Monitoring and supervision A regular monitoring and supervision system had been set in place at each level. National and local supervisors provided supervisory and proefessional support to the teachers.

Sharing of experiences In most project areas, teachers (both within and outside the Project) were sharing experiences and knowledge acquired at the NTUC course for application in classroom teaching.

School upgrading and water and sanitation Of the 700 target schools, 174 had received support for reconstruction or upgrading, 95 for construction of simple water systems, and 20 have had simple toilets installed. Local contributions accounted for 40-50% of total costs. Construction and renovation costs were shared between UNICEF, MOE and the communities. In Vang Viang district, Vientiane Province, for example, UNICEF had contributed 50% of the costs, MOE 13% and communities 37%.

Parents Associations interviewed were keen to see increased quality improvement within their schools and made large commitments in terms of furniture, labour and, in some cases, the digging of wells.

IMPACT AT CLASSROOM LEVEL

All members of the evaluation team felt that the NTUC Project had brought about a significant improvement in teaching methods and that the improvement was likely to continue.

The *ethos* of NTUC classrooms All classrooms visited had picture on the walls and learning aids were available. There was variation in the quality of the materials and their presentation; in some rooms, materials were well-selected and displayed, in others the effect was enthusiastic but jumbled. However, the overall atmosphere was welcoming and child-friendly. Hanging decorations and pictures indicated teachers attempts to make the rooms attractive. The children's conduct was lively; even in the least-developed classrooms the children were animated, interested and eager to contribute. Teachers showed considerable skill in presentation. Questions allowed children to respond with more than one-word answers, and teachers moved from entire class to individual interactions.

Classroom organization The furniture in many classrooms was arranged so that the children could sit in groups to participate in practical work or discussion. In others the seating was traditional, with the children all facing the blackboard. In these classes, teachers said that the children worked in groups only occasionally and in one or two subjects. Teachers seemed clear about the reasons for seating children in groups. Where classroom organization was more traditional, boys and girls were separated; boys in the back rows, girls at the front, "so that they don't fight". Groups were formed in different ways: some children simply turned round to face those behind them, others moved around the class to familiar groups. Boys and girls worked together in the groups.

Teaching and learning Some well-developed learning centres were observed. Teachers in Wapi, Saravane Province, said that they found the learning centre difficult to develop because of storage problems. However, in a classroom with no walls, a teacher addressed the problem by keeping her materials in a series of plastic bags hung from the rafters. Well-developed learning centres had separated areas with a learning box and other materials available. Children used them before and after school and during recess. In some places, materials were obviously well-used. There were other examples of children's interest in learning: several girls were observed reading books at recess time on the steps of a school, and children reading indoors during recess as well. Blackboards were used in non-conventional ways. For example, children were allowed to practice on the board. One teacher encouraged children to teach each other.

Teachers identified lesson planning as an important aspect of their training. There was wide variation in the standards of lesson planning and levels of supervisory input, but lessons benefitted from prior thought and planning. Teachers in many schools had lesson plans open on their desks, and some had their supervisor's comments as well.

Mr. Phan is a second grade teacher at Phahom school and a second year trainee in NTUC. Following his training at the Teacher Upgrading Centre, he has shared experiences such as lesson planning, new methods of teaching and the production of teaching materials, with other teachers. When teaching, he divides his students into groups. He places faster learners in each group so that the fast learners help others. During the visit, he was teaching Mathematics (a lesson on shapes); he was defining a circle and showing the children how to measure its diameter.

He said prior the upgrading course he did not work in this way. He teaches health education once a week, washing hands, brushing teeth and how to use the bathroom. He said that some children have toilets in their homes, but most do not. He informs parents about the children's progress, sends the children's test results home and requires the parents to the test record. If children do not come to school after several days, he reports absenteeism to the director of the school.

Asked about the teacher upgrading modules, he noted that the lesson planning module had proved the most useful. Prior to taking the teacher upgrading course, he did not write lesson plans or keep student records.

The teachers Teachers were active. They spent time moving around the room, talking to individuals as well as instructing from their desks. They showed a remarkable degree of pride and confidence in their developing professional skills. Morale was high.

Teachers believed that, as a result of their training, children understood better and learned faster and earlier, and retained their learning longer.

Teachers' comments and attitudes seemed an overwhelming endorsement of the impact of the Project and of the confidence with which teachers were putting their training into practice.

All teachers said that, with the new methods, they had to work two or three more hours per day, but none complained.

It was found that it was difficult to replace initial supplies. Teachers were using their own money or money from the parents' association.

The children The children endorsed the view that the project had improved their enjoyment of school and they felt that learning was easier. They did not want to go back to the old methods. The village headman of Ban Nong Nom noticed differences in the children's attitude. As well as wanting to come to school, they were more out-going and "braver". *"They would have been much too shy to talk to a foreigner before"*, he said.

"Teachers explain things now".

"The materials help me to learn".

"It is easier to understand now"

Trainers, teachers and community members alike agreed that the children attended school more regularly. Visits confirmed that each class had at most three or four absentees, despite the fact that the team was visiting the schools during the rice harvesting season.

Classroom learning materials Teachers made use of a variety of posters, diagrams and learning materials to support their lessons. Some children interviewed said that the illustrations were done by themselves. In terms of use of classroom learning materials there was a noticeable difference between NTUC teachers and teachers who were not part of the NTUC.

In the room of the first grade teacher at Phong Peng School, many artifacts were in use. These included a series of number flashcards, desks with children's names on them, and a cupboard for storing teacher made materials.

Health education In the NTUC Project, teachers are taught health education. The evaluation team observed a lesson on healthy eating, and parents and community members reported that the children were cleaner and washed more. However, many schools did not have clean water and latrines, an essential step towards improving children's health.

Impact on non-NTUC teachers In some schools teachers not trained through NTUC had learned from their colleagues. The evaluation team was told of sharing experiences through Saturday morning in-service sessions and of teachers observing in each others' classroom.

The role of the supervisors The support of the supervisors seemed a vital aspect of the Project and provided a link between the modules taught and their implementation in the classroom.

IMPACT AT SCHOOL LEVEL

School environment There seemed to be good morale in most schools the evaluation team visited. In Xieng Khouang District in a four-class, incomplete school, where none of the teachers had been trained in the course, conditions were poor, and the pupils appeared malnourished. Teacher in-service and school upgrading led to confident teachers and a better physical school environment. The process of transferring information from the NTUC teachers to others in the school added to a positive classroom climate.

with willing attendance at Saturday meetings, open discussions, and genuine sharing of materials and experiences. The physical environment of the school had also been improved with the establishment of school gardens. In many cases, the classrooms of NTUC teachers were noticeably neater and more efficient than those of non-NTUC teachers.

Teacher/peer in-service work at schools and across schools There was a consistent multiplier effect in the ways in which information gained through the project was extended to other teachers and to other schools. Saturday morning (or Friday afternoon) NTUC meetings embody an important "each one teach one" principle: to teach is to learn twice, thus ensuring better understanding of NTUC ideas by the trainees

IMPACT AT DISTRICT LEVEL

In its visit to Vang Vieng district, the evaluation team was able to see some instances of the multiplier effect of in-service training. Sharing training and trainers covered 80% of all teachers of the district. In 1993/94, the province used its own funds to support 2 staff each from 7 districts (one district level technical staff and one school teacher) to participate in the NTUC course. After that, each district used one school as a demonstration school to apply the teaching principles, and to bring in nearby teachers to train in these principles. Of the 7 districts which attended the course, 4 had been able to use the new methods well. This demonstrated the commitment of the province and the trust in the value of the programme.

In the Palawek Project, 25 teachers (16 untrained) in 7 schools had requested 2 weeks training in production of teaching aids and use of new teaching methodologies. In Wapi District, it was noticeable that ideas were shared within a school but not across schools. It was felt that Project supervisors needed to consider better ways to disseminate ideas. The construction of materials was also not an ongoing activity in all schools. Most were made during the course. Weekly staff training did not focus on the making of practical items.

The development of clusters The grouping of larger schools with satellite schools was already evident, although the reasons for such groupings appeared more likely to be administrative and economic, rather then pedagogic. In Xieng Khouang, clusters had been defined and three additional clusters (each with about seven schools) were to be established the following year. It was planned that the core school would become a model school.

Multigrade teaching As the project expands to more remote areas, multigrade teaching will need to be introduced on a larger scale.

IMPACT AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

Parents and the community at large play an important role in the success of the NTUC project. Firstly, they are important contributors to school construction, renovation, and supplies. In many districts in the country, school construction had become an interdependent partnership among the provincial government (cement), UNICEF (roofing materials and nails), and the community (wood and labour). In one rural school in Xieng Khouang province, parents contributed for school furniture. In no area, however, was there evidence that the community and the school worked together to create a more stable and sustainable source of regular income for the school.

Secondly, involvement in school construction and maintenance gives parents and the community greater interest in, and a sense of ownership over, the school. In some cases, this seemed to have strengthened parent associations which, in some schools, were organised by parents, with parent leaders and regular meetings to discuss issues such as school finances and student problems. In Xieng Khouang, for example, some of these associations played a role with school teachers in identifying and tracking down children

Mr. Khamsy is a Grade 5 teacher at Namone School (Vang Vieng), which is the main school of a cluster with 5 satellite schools, He is the only NTUC teacher in his school. Mr. Khamsy has been teaching in Namone for 10 years and has finished 2 years of the NTUC course. He said that the most useful thing he had learned there was teaching in groups. He also liked group discussion techniques and lesson planning. There are 12 subjects in Grade 5. He uses drama to teach Lao and to teach about TB and malaria. He knows that TB is a communicable disease. Last year all but one of his students passed the exam. That student is repeating the grade. He does not use the toshaban much because there are not enough stencils. As with the other teachers, his lesson plans and records were well kept. He also reported that he taught other teachers how to write lesson plans and produce teaching aids. He has many wall displays and a lot of teaching materials such as clocks and maps. Mr. Khamsy's morale and attitude were very good. Students in his class reported that they like Mr. Khamsy better than their previous teachers because he speaks clearly and explains in a way that they can understand. They also said he told them stories.

not enroled in, or not attending school. In another district visited, they helped to encourage parents to take a more active interest in their children's education, such as by ensuring that they did their homework and came to school neat and clean. In at least one instance, however, association leaders were chosen for their financial status rather than for their particular interest in the school. There was little evidence, furthermore, that these associations were allowed to be involved in areas beyond financial contributions and student motivation such as school management, planning and the teaching-learning process.

Mr. Phi-khamkhong, principal of Phong Peng Primary School, Vang Vieng District, said that teaching materials and knowing how to use them had the most important impact on the programme, together with the new record keeping system. This requires the teacher to state the reason for absenteeism and also to go to the home of the parents if the child does not show up after more than three days.

Often, there was an active attempt by the school to enlist the support of the community by making it more aware of the nature and results of changes deriving from the NTUC Project. For example, one school in Xieng Khouang was regularly organising large meetings with the community to discuss the new methods and activities inspired by the NTUC, and parents in turn recognised its results in how their children learned in and reacted to school. Teachers thought this "advertising" was instrumental in getting parents to send children to school and in making the results visible. In the NTUC Project, teachers are also encouraged to reach out more regularly to parents, in some cases sending monthly reports of student progress and visiting parents at home to track down absent pupils.

Finally, parents also reported that children taught by NTUC teachers attended school more regularly, enjoyed school more, and learned faster and more easily.

IMPACT ON THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

The impact of NTUC has gone beyond the classroom, the Project schools, and their respective communities. It has triggered changes in the education system as a whole. Most importantly, it has begun to build individual and system-wide capacity at all levels of the system, and especially in training and supervision at the school and district level. Local supervisors (usually the head teachers of central schools) seemed to understand the Project and their role within it. Headteachers of other schools appeared to understand the value of the training and to work with the newly trained teachers in order to transmit NTUC ideas in their schools.

One reason for NTUC's success is that NTUC supervisors visit schools 20 days per month and have a mandate not only to focus on the NTUC trained teachers but also to work with other teachers not included in the Project. This ensures that teachers are not left out of the supervisory cycle and that NTUC ideas spread through the system (e.g., "Integrated" lesson plans so that teachers of the same subjects teach in a similar way). In other words, there seems to be a real professional identity arising from the NTUC among the supervisors involved. Supervisors meet regularly, exchange experiences, and receive reinforcement and enrichment.

The impact of NTUC on the school system was such that there were mechanisms in place at the local level for its further development and implementation. The current informal system of school clusters helped in this regard, allowing easy access of NTUC messages from trained teachers to other teachers, often through the informally organised Saturday morning meetings. The gradual development of more formal clusters, with clearly defined functions (both pedagogic and administrative), structures and procedures, should help even further in this regard (for example, defining clearer guidelines for the organisation of Saturday morning teacher meetings.)

LINKS WITH OTHER EDUCATION PROJECTS, NGOs AND FUNDING AGENCIES

The "Education for All by the Year 2000" initiative in Lao is supported by various agencies. Through the NTUC project, the government and UNICEF aim to bring training to rural untrained teachers. Several agencies are also working to upgrade teacher training and school curricula.

Asian Development Bank and World Bank

The Asian Development Bank, through the Teachers' Development Centre, is developing curricula and methodology for pre-service training. No formal links have been established between NTUC and the ADB-supported Project although meetings and discussions have taken place between members of both project teams. Since MOE's staff is limited, very often the same individuals are involved in the development of both projects. This does not, however, ensure communication and cross fertilisation of ideas.

The World Bank, with the Curriculum Research Centre (REIS), is developing primary school curricula and in-service training to support the introduction of new textbooks. Supervisors are being trained in assisting teachers with new methods. It is expected that many of these supervisors will be those already working with the NTUC Project.

Integration is expected to take place as the new system is implemented. Collaboration at this stage, though, would ensure smoother integration later.

MOE staff feel that all projects are promoting similar styles of teaching. However, lesson planning, classroom organisation and so on are developed independently in the different projects, leading to potentially mixed messages and duplication of effort.

NGOs and other funding agencies

Save the Children Fund (UK), who is involved in developing an 11+1 pre-service curriculum, has used some of the modules developed for NTUC. The NTUC Project has established informal links with the SCF (UK) programme and cooperative and continuing discussions were reported.

There are plans to use the *Ecoles sans Frontieres* newsletter to disseminate information to teachers. Channels should be set up to enable contributions from NTUC teachers.

As indicated earlier, Church World Service and Catholic Relief Service have adopted the NTUC programme and are providing funds for its implementation in other provinces. Japan Sotoshu Relief Committee has provided school materials, including alphabet charts, child-sized blackboards and the toshaban, a portable silk screen printing system. Risho Kosei Kai (RKK), Nichirenshu (a Japanese Buddhist NGO) and the Toyota Foundation have provided some of the funds for school upgrading, learning materials in schools and training of school administrators.

Cooperation between UNICEF and NGOs is well established, probably much better than in some other countries in the region.

CONCLUSIONS

In regard to the original objectives of the NTUC Project, the 1995 evaluation found that the following had been achieved:

1. An in-service training system had been established to improve the quality of teacher education and teaching competencies of untrained/unqualified teachers currently working in rural/minority districts where education quality and effectiveness are low. Evidence consistently showed that teachers trained in the Project had gained in knowledge and skills: had high morale and motivation; used learning materials regularly and with creativity; prepared and delivered their lessons systematically, and effectively used a variety of pupil-centred approaches to teaching. They also benefitted in terms of both Ministry certification and community status.

2. The proportion of untrained/unqualified teachers in these districts had been reduced to less than 10%

Mr. Konsy, Education Vice-Director of Vang Vieng district said that Vang Vieng was selected for the Project because it has the largest number of untrained/unqualified teachers. The best thing he had learned was how to supervise better and to teach others how to supervise. He felt much more confident now about how to do his job. He was also more in touch with the education situation at local level. He had enjoyed the experience of exchanging lessons and learning from other districts, and had learned to coordinate with other sectors such as agriculture health and the Lao Women's Union. Mr. Konsy recommended increasing the teaching of life skills as part of community development. He hoped to gain greater experience through exchanges with others.

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3. Over 400 primary teacher educators (local, district, and provincial supervisors) had been trained with specific skills in the upgrading of untrained/unqualified teachers. These trainers generally carried out their work with diligence and imagination.

4. Trainers had in turn trained (or are in the process of training) over 2,200 untrained teachers through residential courses and in-school exercises; over 350 such teachers had already completed their training.

5. Training manuals and resource materials for trainers and trainees had been developed in the Lao language. Experience showed that these required revision and re-writing to make them more relevant to the rural Laotian context.

6. A supervision and monitoring system had been developed to ensure that teacher educators and trainers performed their tasks, and to provide regular school-study guidance and supervision to untrained teachers after the residential courses. There was evidence to indicate that this supervision system was well-managed.

Mr. Keo Mouangvong is the director of Phahom school. He is a local supervisor who completed the NTUC course in 1994/95. He felt that the benefit of the Project was that he could get his teachers to teach according to the reforms. He now feels more involved with the process of education change and confident that he can implement such changes at the local level. He now sees more clearly how to implement education reform, what to supervise, and what to monitor. He also mentioned constraints such as the fact that the teachers live six kilometers away from the school and cannot visit the parents of children when they are absent from school.

7. Basic water and sanitation facilities had been provided to Teacher Upgrading Centres and support had been provided to improve the physical conditions of selected schools where the teachers work. Water and sanitation supplies, however, should be provided more regularly to these selected schools.

8. Linkages had been developed between the Teacher Upgrading Centres, the schools, and the communities in order to foster improved school-community partnership in the education process. Parents were supportive of the schools where the NTUC was implemented, making considerable contributions to school finances and with a high degree of interest in their children's education.

9. Ownership of the Project by the government has been established, as well as close collaboration between different levels of the education services, the UNICEF field office, the Australian National Committee for UNICEF, and AUSAID.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation report concluded that the NTUC Project should be continued by the MOE with UNICEF support. The following specific recommendations were made:

- Expand to other districts with sizeable percentages of uncertified teachers, using the human resources already developed in the Project as a catalyst for further capacity-building within the system.

- Continue selected support, through the collaboration of communities and local goverment, to school rehabilitation and repair.

- Select unqualified teachers for participation in the Project on the basis of certain clear criteria such as; greater participation of females; age restrictions to include people who will continue to teach for at least five years (before retirement age); entry criteria to ensure that those people who start will complete the course successfully; and entry based on observed teaching ability.

- Reduce the residential component of the Project to two years, with some modules provided through school and cluster-based activities.

- The training modules should be revised and re-written so as to be more grounded in the reality of the rural Laotian context and to more concretely address the nature of rural classrooms, schools, and communities; consistently reflect issues and concerns related to girls' education and status of women, be based more explicitly

on methods developed within the adult education field; include information related to "Facts For Life", HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, and to the development of healthy and health-promoting schools. Modules on multigrade teaching should emphasise what it is and how to organise a multigrade class. Modules delivered through school. and cluster-based training should be based on appropriate methods of distance education. This revision should be conducted by experienced teachers, supervisors, and trainers working in the field, along with professionals from other teacher development projects in order to ensure complementarity with these projects.

- Continue to supply learning materials and books, to replace and add to those already provided to participating schools. Mobile libraries should introduce new books and include a list of strategies for reading.

- Review the entire system of training, support and supervision in order to encourage female participation at all levels of decision-making and implementation. A concerted attempt must be made to render the system more "women-friendly", including an evaluation of present practices to identify those which include or exclude women.

- Further strengthen and institutionalise the supervisory system (in part by including more women participants), particularly at district and local levels, through a selection process and regular training of supervisors. In order to reinforce the objectives of the Project and its implementation in schools and classrooms, the focus should be on programme and lesson planning; classroom management; the development and use of learning materials and of child-centred teaching-learning strategies; and experience exchange with special time earmarked for demonstration lessons. NTUC supervisors should follow-up on extension or spin-off effects in all districts to determine the impact and to consider whether the same supervision system should also be in place for the extension of the programme.

- Identify local innovations in teaching and learning as well as in classroom and school management, and ensure their documentation and dissemination in the education system through a district newsletter.

- Develop "model" or "demonstration" schools, also termed "centres of best practice", in each district and encourage regional exchanges in Laos. Cluster core schools should be "centres of good practice."

- Further develop and refine a nationwide cluster system, with clarification of the structure, function, and staffing of school clusters, focused on their role in the further professional development of teachers and in strengthening linkages across schools, between trained and untrained teachers, and between schools and communities.

- The linkages among the school, parents, and the community should be strengthened by more clearly defining the functions, structures, and responsibilities of parent associations, including their role both in financial support to the school and in school management and teaching and learning; and by developing community-school-teacher income generation schemes (such as school gardens, fish ponds. printing with the toshaban) in order to create more sustainable and regular sources of income for school activities.

- The linkages between education and health should be strengthened by developing the school as a healthy environment, through the supply of water and sanitation facilities and (perhaps subsidised) school hygiene monitors; an effective source of messages on health and healthy lifestyles; a centre for the implementation and integration of health and nutrition interventions through the organisation of parental education programmes in these fields.

Ban Katang is five kilometers from the road. You have to walk. Even a motorbike cann't get you there, and you have to cross two rivers. The people are Khmu. They badly wanted a teacher but it is difficult to get someone to live there. A teacher travel from Wapi every day. He is. being trained at the NTUC Project. The community gives him an extra thirty kip a day and each family gave him a chicken. There are 25 children, and he learnt through the Project how to run a multigrade class. They are all happy and the children are going to school.

- High-level attempts should be made to ensure closer collaboration and complementarity among the education development projects supported by the various international agencies—UNICEF, the Asian Development Bank (pre-service training), the World Bank (textbook development, assessment, and evaluation)—and NGOs so as to ensure consistent messages and mutually supportive structures and mechanisms. This can include, for example, more frequent joint visiting of projects; increased sharing and discussion of project documentation and materials; clearer guidelines and decisions from the MOE on integrating various aspects of projects (such as by adding girls' education issues to the pre-service programme, and ensuring a common lesson plan).

- The wider issues related to professional teacher development beyond the actual training need to be systematically addressed by the MOE. Promotions and salary increases resulting from completing the NTUC course must be promptly made available in order to maintain the enthusiasm and high morale generated by the programme. Other incentives, not necessarily financial in nature, might also be considered, including publication of interesting local innovations and rewards for innovative ideas and successes.

- As the programme expands, another system-wide issue will become important: the utilisation of trained trainers and supervisors in districts where the NTUC will be newly introduced. This should be encouraged, with career incentives if possible, to ensure both the smooth introduction of the programme elsewhere and to rapidly develop a cadre of trained supervisors and trainers in the new districts.

- Three other important aspects of the system should be studied to ensure greater complementarity between these issues and the NTUC:

- the assessment and examination system: to what extent might it be reformed so as to promote, rather than hinder, the approaches and results of the NTUC?;

- the development of new curricula and textbooks: to what extent can NTUC ensure that its messages on curricular content and teaching methods are being reinforced by the new content being developed for the schools ?; and

- the pre-service system being developed through the Teacher Development Centre: to what extent do the methods and content being introduced into pre-service education complement, rather than conflict with, those of the NTUC?

Source :

Sheldon Shaeffer, Elaine Fumiss, Valerie Emblen and Ngu Shui Meng, Lao PDR: Evaluation of the Network for Teacher Upgrading Project, UNICEF Vientiane, November 1995

CHILE

A re-definition of teachers role requires teachers to assume a critical perspective on their role so as to perceive the difference between authoritarian and democratic teaching, and between dependent and autonomous learning. Teachers must distance themselves from their work in order to understand how they internalized their conventional roles, how they became comfortable in those assigned roles, and how such roles are translated in their pedagogical practice. Only then can teachers begin to assume an alternative role. TED offered teachers the possibility of trying their new role within the workshop before they could exercise it in the classroom.

The Research Workshop thus provided an important environment for teachers to engage in critical self-evaluation, analyze and discuss the problems they face in their schools and classrooms, and generate knowledge on how to address those problems in an alternative manner.

Research conducted at the workshops dealt with daily problems at school such as the exercising of discipline, lack of motivation of students, pace of teaching and learning, heterogeneous groups, lack of parental interest, and institutional conflicts.

Although a research method was recommended and followed, such research did not aspire to validate knowledge. It assisted the participants in raising issues of concern, posing questions, thinking and arguing more rigorously, and developing a better understanding of the issues discussed. Research started from practice and from a critical analysis of such practice, and valued teacher knowledge, common sense and experience.

unicef - Teachers Make The Difference UNESCO

THE *TALLERES DE EDUCACION DEMOCRATICA*-TED

DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION WORKSHOPS

OVERVIEW

In Chile, as in most of Latin America, the main challenge currently facing school systems lies in improving the equity and quality of education. This implies a focus on teaching-learning processes in the classroom and the quality of such processes. In turn, this requires placing teachers and teacher education and upgrading central to all reform efforts.

Since educational change requires the active participation of teachers, and since teachers must at the same time be promoters of change and subjects of change themselves, teacher organizations must assume a leading role in promoting teacher professionalization and upgrading. The long history and strong presence of teacher unions in many Latin American countries place these in a key position for large-scale involvement of teachers in the process of change and self-change.

These were some of the basic premises that led to the creation of the *Talleres de Educacion Democratica*—TED (Democratic Education Workshops). TED started in 1987 as a joint initiative of the World Confederation of Professional Teacher Associations (CMOPE); the *Programa Interdisciplinario de Investigaciones en Educacion*—Interdisciplinary Program for Educational Research (PIIE), a Chilean NGO; and the Teacher Federation of Norway. TED emerged as a proposal for teacher empowerment to be owned and conducted by teacher professional associations.

TED was initiated in Chile and later expanded to other Latin American countries. It was implemented in agreement with teacher unions in Chile (*Colegio de Profesores)*, Peru *(Sindicato Unico de Trabajadores*–SUTEP). and Paraguay (*Organizacion de Trabajadores de la Educacion de Paraguay* - OTEP). The program lasted seven years and formally concluded in December 1993.

TED'S OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

TED operated through workshops where teachers met to reflect upon and evaluate their professional experience, in order to rethink their role as educators and to transform their pedagogical practice into a more efficient and democratic one. Teachers met with a common desire to develop and improve their teaching practice, as well as to share and evaluate the innovations that they were defining and experimenting with. TED's overall aim was contributing to transforming teacher organizations from within, and to propel them towards undertaking a lead role in school reform and entering the social debate on education and education policies. TED worked towards generating a renovated pedagogical movement within teacher organizations from which bottom-up and school-centered reform proposals could arise.

The underlying principle was that *"teachers will be able to consciously and creatively modify their teaching practice inasmuch as they are able to acquire the capacity to analyze it critically"* (Vera, 1985). In other words, placing teachers in contact with new educational theories or teaching methods and techniques, or providing schools with modern educational technology, may be of little value and have little impact on changing teacher practices and improving teaching in the classroom unless teachers are convinced of the need to change. This can only occur through a process of personal awareness. Teachers thus need to be assisted with the necessary knowledge and conditions to take an objective look at their practice, reflect on it critically, compare it with that of other colleagues, identify and understand the problems they face, and value their own knowledge, experience and creativity.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES OF TED

TED workshops aimed at modifying the internal world of the educator in ways that would enable him or her to break with some of the main problems of the traditional school culture: authoritarianism, dogmatism, bureaucracy and technocratism. To accomplish this, TED had three learning objectives:

(a) changing the educator's role : from a merely *technical* role to a *professional role*;

(b) changing teachers' working practice: from isolated work to collective work; and

(c) changing the modes of teachers' learning: from *dependent* learning to autonomous learning.

Changing the educator's role: From a *technical* role to a *professional* role

The role of the teacher as a "technician" is externally programmed. Everything—the content of teaching, the methods and pace of teaching, the exercises to use in the class and the modalities of evaluation—are provided for the teacher. Teachers are allienated from their work, do not understand the *whys, hows* and *what fors* of what they do on a daily basis. They have no say in the decisions that shape the teaching profession and role. Professional autonomy and professional responsibility are inter-related. The teacher who accepts being reduced to an implementor of curricula and txetbooks abandons the possibility of understanding the complexity of teaching and of learning, and only demands ready-made formulas from teacher training courses and programs. Teaching thus becomes a mechanical and repetitive task, devoid of the pleasure of teaching, and often therefore denying such pleasure to students in their own learning.

The professional teacher, on the other hand, is more capable of diagnosing complex situations, of understanding that students confront diverse types of difficulties in the process of learning, have different learning styles, and therefore require different teaching styles that respect their group and individual learning needs, interests and experiences. The professional teacher is more proactive, takes greater initiative, is more flexible, has original ideas, is more creative, and has a wider global vision. He/she asserts more control over the act of teaching.

To achieve this objective, TED workshops aimed at creating conditions for teachers to modify the relationship they have with their work, which in turn implies modifying the way teachers perceive themselves and their role as educators.

Changing teachers' working practice: From *isolated* work to *collective* work

The technocratic organizational structure of schools makes it difficult for teachers to project teaching as a professional competence, and bureaucratic structures in schools pre-suppose teaching as an individual, isolated, lonely task.

Teachers in the same school may not have any contact with each other or systematically share the teaching and learning problems they face. They resist confronting experiences together. They are afraid to be evaluated and therefore afraid to evaluate others. Competitiveness among teachers is far more common than cooperation.

TED workshops tried to create adequate conditions for educators to change the ways in which they approach their work and to be more cooperative. Therefore, there was a strong emphasis on group work.

- *"I came because I am tired of what happens in my school. Tired of always doing the same things, of working alone, of the fear to change. I try to do many things. I have always been for change. I would like to believe that all of us walk together towards the same goal" (Teacher)*

- *"I am here because I do not like the school the way it is. I want to learn useful things. I want to be respected, to be loved. I came because I want to take advantage of this opportunity they have given us to think and to speak up." (Student)*

- *"I came because I am worried about what is going on in school. Is it true that all of us will have to pay ? What if we cannot ? Where will my children be sent ? I am also tired of hearing my children protest. I want to participate, too. The school must change." (Mother)*

- *"I teach Social Sciences, and have participated and animated TED workshops over the last five years. My professional life is divided into 'before' and 'after' TED. The reflections I have the privilege to share with you are permeated with a TED ian vision. For us, TED teachers, things and words are not only things and words; everything has a why and a what for." (Animator of TED workshops.)*

"Why did I decide to act differently? Because through the TED experience we become agents of change, because I believe in the important role of the teacher, and because I believe that a democratic relationship favours the development of both teachers and students. The situation that led me to engage in an open and public reflection occurred as follows: Claudia, one of my fourth grade students, came and told me: "Miss, there is this teacher who did not want to accept my home-work because she said I was late... but the day I had to present it, I was ill. She said that was not her problem, that she had assigned that homework about a month earlier, and that I would therefore get a red mark. If I wanted her to accept my home-work, I had to be accompanied by my father or mother. The next day she requested my homework, and I told her that, since my parents could not come, I did not bring it. So she gave me another red mark. I find this unfair". When Claudia finished her story, I told her: "Dont' worry, I will not pay attention to those marks". And I felt both satisfied and dissatisfied with my answer: satisfied, because my answer relieved Claudia somewhat: dissatisfied because my attitude did not help solve the real problem.

The girls continued to comment on what Claudia had said, and I felt I became receptive to their points of view. Claudia's problem triggered a storm of complaints, resentment, pain, and frustration, and I began to digest and catalogue it while my students spoke. Curiously enough, while this informal therapy session unfolded, I started to question my own opinions and stereotypes about many of my girl students. I became aware that, even though I believed I was a good teacher, I still had a lot to learn and to understand. I distanced myself and I saw myself committed to my students, affectively and emotionally. The attitude of my colleague appeared clearly unjust, showing her as an intransigent, arbitrary, rigid and intolerant person. The

Changing the modes of teacher's learning: From *dependent* learning to *autonomous* learning

Just as teachers have internalized competitiveness instead of cooperative relationships, they have internalized dependent forms of learning.

The school system traditionally favours authoritarian relations between teachers and students, and a dogmatic approach to the curriculum and to pedagogy. Teachers prefer their students to repeat information rather than to think, ask or argue; to copy from books rather than to conduct research based in reality; or to respond with what the teacher wants to hear rather than to let students incorporate their own experiences. Through this process, student learning ends up depending almost totally on teacher teaching.

Developing an education system that is based on and enhances autonomous learning, where learners recount their own experiences and then reflect on and convert these experiences into knowledge, requires a major shift in school systems and in the overall conceptualization of education.

In order to foster an understanding of the process of autonomous learning vis a vis dependent learning, TEQ workshops aimed at creating adequate conditions for the participants to convert workshop experiences into teaching material. By learning to be autonomous learners teachers are better able to accept that their students are autonomous learners themselves.

TED LEARNING CONDITIONS

TED methodology was based on three elements:

(a) teacher research on their pedagogical practice;

(b) group work; and

(c) on-going evaluation of teacher learning,

Teacher research: Learning to reflect critically on one's own practice

A re-definition of teachers role requires teachers to assume a critical perspective on their role so as to perceive the difference between authoritarian and democratic teaching, and between dependent and autonomous learning. Teachers must distance themselves from their work in order to understand how they internalized their conventional roles, how they became comfortable in those assigned roles, and how such roles are translated in their pedagogical practice. Only then can teachers begin to assume an alternative role. TED offered teachers the possibility of trying their new role within the workshop before they could exercise it in the classroom.

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Group work: Learning to work collaboratively

Since one of the objectives of TED was changing teachers' work style from isolated to cooperative, workshops utilized a group methodology that helped teachers experience what they are required to do in their classrooms and in their professional relationships with colleagues.

A cooperative group has democratic relationships. It enables participants to combine solidarity and liberty, equity and diversity, individual identities and group interest. The cooperative group is an effective strategy for learning, research and action. The feeling of group work is shared, and individuals use their energies towards the task at hand, each contributing to the social dynamic and to its expected outcomes.

Evaluation : Learning to learn

At the end of each workshop, participants reflected upon what they had experienced, the method used, and the ways through which they interacted in their work or when facing resistance within the group. The evaluation served as a way for teachers to learn how to learn from their experiences.

FRAMEWORK OF THE WORKSHOPS

Certain conditions are essential for a group to work effectively. TED termed these conditions a "framework" that includes space, time and roles.

Each workshop had three phases: (a) information; (b) group work; and (c) evaluation.

Phase 1: Information The first step is an informative one. The objective is to gather teachers' knowledge and input on the topic being researched. This encourages the expression of common sense, ordinary knowledge, concerns, fears, and expectations. Listening to each other is the main activity.

Phase II: Group work During this phase of the workshop, the participants work in groups and conduct the research in four stages:

1. *Defining the problem* through four steps:

a) Participants share conflict situations experienced in the classroom or at school an incident with a student or a group of students, a colleague, an administrator, or parents.

b) After each teacher shares an experience, the group discusses and decides which one should be analyzed. The process of coming to consensus makes the participants explain and defend their choices. Finally, the group makes a consensual, democratic decision.

c) From the event selected, the group defines the problems to be studied (e.g. the conduct of the teacher in the incident chosen).

d) The group converts the problem into a research project (e.g. developing questions to try to understand the teacher's conduct in that particular situation).

2. *Objectifying the problem* The group reconstructs the incident externally and internally, distancing themselves from the situation in order to objectify the problem. This can be done through.

a) *external reconstruction:* the teacher who lived through the incident describes it from a new perspective—as an observer instead of the protagonist. Other group members assist the teacher by asking questions, but without value judgements.

b) *internal reconstruction:* the teacher involved in the incident describes it from his/her own perspective. He/she describes the emotions felt at the time, the reasons why he/she thinks the other protagonist acted the way they did, and rationalizes the action taken. Other group members assist by asking questions.

more I reflected on this situation, the greater the different perceptions that emerged. I realized that I had a partial understanding of my students. Also, at some point, I was able to put myself in my colleague's shoes and to try to understand her attitude. Research, as we have experienced it at TED workshops, allows us to take distance from our daily problems and thus understand them better." (Florida Acuna, teacher and TED coordinator.)

3. *Interpretation of the problem* Group members interpret the incident. First, they discuss the psycho-socio-pedagogical and institutional conceptions that are revealed by the incident. They ask questions, discuss, and develop hypotheses as to why the situation occurred. Then, they try to relate the incident to the larger institutional environment.

4. *Development of alternatives* Teachers formulate alternative actions for the incident that was analyzed, based on the group discussions, and using dramatization, brain-storming and other techniques. They then discuss what changes should be introduced within the school system and culture in order to institute the alternative proposals.

The TED coordinator cooperates with the groups so that they assume their role of being collective, democratic and responsible. In this way, the coordinator operates from outside the group, concentrating on the group structure, observing the group, but not engaging him/herself in their research project. The coordinator does not define the work nor orient the participants on the steps to follow to accomplish the task. He/she intervenes only to tell workshop members his/her perception of the groups process and of the obstacles they face.

Phase III: Evaluation The evaluation is a time of introspection for each participant to reflect on what was learned during the first two phases and on how that will assist him/her in confronting similar situations in the future.

The fundamental objective of this evaluative phase is to stimulate participants to continue learning for themselves through the process that was experienced with the group during the workshop. The aim is to instill a permanent attitude towards reflection that goes beyond the workshops.

TED operated in Chile, Colombia, Paraguay and Peru. In all these countries, teacher associations supported TED, facilitated an environment receptive to change by those who participated in the workshops, and prepared training cadres within each teacher association so as to strengthen its educational and pedagogical work and ensure the continuation of the effort. These trainers were trained as TED workshop coordinators thus multiplying, within each teacher association, the capacity for conducting their own workshops. By 1992, in Chile, over 600 teachers had participated in TED, 120 of whom became TED workshop coordinators. In Peru workshops reached more than 200 teachers in Lima and in the Chavin Region. Fifteen of these were trained as workshop coordinators; they coordinate workshops and assist the Department of Pedagogical Affairs of SUTEP. In Paraguay, approximately 100 teachers and 15 workshop coordinators were trained in Asuncion and some of the interior provinces.

TED planted the seed to interest teacher associations and unions in pedagogical reflection and advancement within their organizations. In addition to the workshops and diverse initiatives taken by workshop leaders, TED led to the formation of groups of teachers who, with varying degrees of regularity, meet to consider daily pedagogic practices, to study, and to propose alternatives to problems in education. Members of these groups feel part of growing educational movement. The transformation and building process initiated by TED thus continues, even though the program ended in December 1993.

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THE NEWSLETTER MOMENTO INFORMATIVO

Published by PIIE, Momento Informativo (Informative Moment) was the vehicle through which teachers within the TED program shared ideas, information and research result. The newsletter was published four times a year. and included articles by PIIE staff, news of TED workshops, and letter from teachers and workshop coordinators. Plays, poems, interviews, results of research projects and classroom experiences were regularly included. Momento Informativo helped those involved in the project in Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Paraguay and Colombia to stay in contact with each other, and served as a communication channel with teachers in other countries in the region.

ZIMBABWE

Before Independence education was an elitist activity, so when it was acknowledged it was a human right, available to everyone, there was a need for total change. Ironically in Rhodesia, before Independence, the whites had compulsory primary and secondary education for all whites. White teachers, who were used to dealing with every child having an education, were more sympathetic towards the slow learners and the children with disabilities, and were more used to dealing with parents every day. The black teacher, however, who dealt with only the top 2 or 4 percent of the population, would have no time for less able children, no time for disabled children, and no time for parents. This was part of the legacy of colonialism. And this is the kind of change that is really needed.

I think there was a weakness in the way we recruited our staff. Definitely the lecturers themselves needed training and self-training in terms of methodologies suitable for rural school children. As mentioned earlier, ZINTEC lecturers were recruited mainly from the secondary sector and from a system which was not very innovative. We should have had an in-service Master's degree in primary education for the lecturers while they were lecturing, or let them off for a year to do specialized courses. These were very keen, hard working, talented young people, but they were not able to work in an innovative way.

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THE ZIMBABWE INTEGRATED TEACHER EDUCATION COURSE (ZINTEC)

ZINTEC is a four-year teacher training programme for rural primary school teachers initiated in 1981 upon Zimbabwe's Independence. ZINTEC emanated from the political will to ensure free and universal primary education despite a serious shortage of teachers for this level. ZINTEC features various important elements : starting with available resources, but planning for the continuous upgrading of teachers over time; designing a programme that includes both pre-and in-service teacher education, and combines residential and distance modalities; ensuring a salary from the beginning of the training; and offering trainees a nationally recognized standard qualification. Upon completion of training, the new teachers were bonded to government service for four years. Between 1981 and 1985, ZINTEC trained 4,600 primary school teachers. The programme continues today with some modifications.

The following is an interview with Fay Chung, first Head of ZINTEC, ex-Minister of Education of Zimbabwe, and currently Chief of UNICEF's Education Cluster. The interview was conducted by Rosa-Maria Torres, Senior Education Adviser at UNICEF's Education Cluster, in New York, on 8 April 1996.

Why the name—ZINTEC?

Actually we were going to call it the Integrated National Teacher Education Course (INTEC). But then somebody made us notice that the course would be called "INTEC course". Somebody suggested putting Zimbabwe in front, so it became ZINTEC.

Why Integrated?

Because it integrated theory with practice, college with distance education. Of course, ZINTEC also integrates the school with the community. But the main meaning was the integration of full-time residential and distance modalities in teacher training.

When did ZINTEC emerge ?

The ZINTEC concept had its roots in the liberation struggle. In the late 1970s, when we were in the refugee camps in Mozambique, we found ourselves with 3 qualified teachers and 30,000 children. We were thus faced with the situation of producing an education system that would work.

Who is we?

We were part of the Education Department of the Zimbabwe Africa National Union (ZANU). There two liberation movements at that time: ZANU and ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People's Union). Both had education programmes during the same period: ZAPU operated mainly in Zambia, and ZANU operated mainly in Tanzania and Mozambique.

From the very beginning, we saw education as a very critical aspect of the liberation struggle. Of course, the 1970s was a period of military struggle so it was difficult to force education in as a main agenda.

The education programme started in 1977. Mr. Mutumbuka became head of Education in ZANU. It was partly of his character and personality that we were able to get education in a big way in 1977 and 1978, and introduce very ambitious programmes.

We created 9 schools in Mozambique, 8 for children and I for adults.

ZANU had a very large contingent of university professionals. We had several highly qualified people in the Education Department, with various specializations. Many secondary and university students joined the liberation struggle. We thus had a lot of potential teacher trainees.

Did any of you have actual experience in designing and implementing a teacher-training programme ?

A couple of us did. We had two school heads who were very experienced. Mutumbuka himself has a PH.D. in Biochemistry. I used to teach Literature at the School of Education in the University of Zambia, where we trained teachers for secondary level teaching.

How did the education initiative start in Mozambique ?

The question was how to provide teacher training and at the same time provide education to the 30,000 children. We experimented with different alternatives—weekend courses, one week courses, distance education. Eventually, we came to what was the best configuration, and that was a 20 week course: after 10 weeks of full time of intensive academic study, students were put into classroom—usually 2 or 3 to each classroom because we had an excess of candidates—to be taught for 4 weeks, then there was a week's holiday, and then they would come back for 6 more weeks. This was Teacher Education Part I.

During the period in Mozambique, we trained 600 teachers with this 20-week course and we trained another group of about 20 in another course called Teacher Education Part II. We also did school administration courses for administrators and secretarial courses for the secretarial staff in the school system. We ran several education programmes including early childhood, primary, secondary, and adult education, the latter following the Freirean approach. We also developed 9 textbooks which were used in our education programmes because we could not use the existing textbooks for Language, Humanities, and History.

We taught in three languages—English, and Shona and Ndebele, the two main African languages in Zimbabwe—and introduced reading materials in these three languages. Students started with English and Shona and in grade 4 they were introduced to the second African language. After Independence, unfortunately, we were not able to maintain the three language policy. It was too difficult and too expensive.

We started in Chimoio, which was very near the border with Zimbabwe. But in 1978, after a second bombing, we had to move out of Chimoio. In 1976 the school had been bombed and many children and teachers were killed. So we went to more distant places like Tete, Gaza, and Nampula.

Give us a sense of how education operated in the refugee camps in Mozambique, in the middle of the war.

Around 6 or 6:30 in the morning, at sunrise, everybody had to leave. The children would meet with their teachers and they would leave the camp. Supervision was very difficult because one had to walk about two miles before one found the next class. They were all scattered. Bombings used to take place around 7:30 a.m. Because the classes were scattered, very few people died in subsequent bombings.

There was a two shift system: if one went to school in the morning one studied in the afternoon, and vice versa. All the work—building of houses, making furniture, planting vegetables—was done by the children as well.

The teacher training was conducted in one centre, originally in Chimoio. Afterwards, we transferred it to Matenji, in Tete province, to a camp called Mabvudzi.

Which were the man sources of inspiration of ZINTEC ?

We were mainly inspired by the need in Mozambiuqe. In my case, I was influenced by my experience at the University of Zambia, between 1971 and 1975, where the Australian model was introduced. At Independence Zambia had 100 university graduates, so they had to take many older students. A system called "mature entry" was initiated in order to

cater for working adults. I was teaching students who were 50 years old, much older than myself at that time. This is how distance education was introduced. A number of courses, particularly the core courses, were offered through correspondence.

When we started ZINTEC everybody told us we were following the Palestine model, but actually we did not know about it then. In the 1940s the Palestines had developed a teacher training programme in a similar situation—refugees, an urgent need for teachers—and had come up with similar solutions.

Independence arrived. What happened then ?

When we were in Mozambique we were already thinking of taking over schools in the liberated areas of Zimbabwe. We never actually did that because independence came in 1980.

At Independence the policy was primary and secondary education for all, anybody could go to any school. Schools were racially divided before Independence. Asians and people of mixed race—Coloreds, as they are called in Zimbabwe—had their own schools. So, when it was announced that anybody could go to any school, schools for Asian and Coloreds were empty. Everyone went to the white schools.

People like Mutumbuka and myself, who had been working during the war on the side of ZANU, were unknown. People just saw us arriving in our blue jeans, taking over the Ministry, and apparently when it was announced that we were the Government, there were Ministry people who literally wept. They were very afraid of us. They saw us as terrorists, murderers, communists.

Independence happened in April, ZINTEC started operating n August, and the colleges opened in February. For the bureaucracy, the fiscal year runs from July to June, and you have to plan before February. So when we came in April and asked for money, they said we had to wait until the following July. So, UNICEF Zimbabwe gave us the office, gave us the typewriters and paid for our first two secretaries. We had to appoint the first lecturers by November so that they could start teaching in February, and here the money came from both the Carnegie and Ford Foundations.

Before Independence, black schools were mainly church schools, because the Rhodesian government felt it had no responsibility to provide education for blacks, except in cities. Cities were supposed to be white areas. Only a few blacks were allowed to live there, and these were blacks who were employed and were not allowed to bring their wives and children to live with them. In 1963 there were 5 secondary schools for blacks—who comprised 96% of the population—in the whole country. For whites—who were 4% of the population—there were about 30 or 40 secondary schools. All the other schools were run by Christian missionaries, but around 1968 the Rhodesian government decided to not allow Christian missionaries to expand education, so they passed a law which stopped Christian missionaries from establishing new schools. When we gained Independence, there was a fear that all the schools would be taken over by the new government.

Of course, we never did. What was the point of taking them over when there were so few and we needed hundreds, thousands more primary and secondary schools ? What we had to control was the quality and the content, through the curriculum and teacher training. And that we controlled anyway.

As we did not have enough teachers, the idea was to plan a teacher training programme similar to the one we had developed in Mozambique. This would enable us to train 9,000 teachers while dealing with the influx of children who were expected to come in 1981.

How did you arrive at the figure of 9,000 teachers ?

We calculated 9,000 times 40—we estimated we would have 40 students per class. Figures showed that just before the war ended there were 800,000 children in school in Zimbabwe. We were expecting another 300,000 children to enrol, but we ended up with

a million extra children. As soon as we said free primary school for all, enrolment went from 800,000 to 1.8 million overnight. We really should have target 25,000 teachers.

How did ZINTEC get started ?

I was the first of ZINTEC, we selected 12 staff from the existing teacher training colleges. Junapah Alles, a former Director General of Education from Sri Lanka, had been appointed just before Independence to look into the upgrading of teachers. He was a UNESCO/UNICEF appointee. Alles was the perfect candidate; he knew something that none of us knew very well; how to handle bureaucracy, a very hostile bureaucracy from the old Ministry of Education. Alles was there for the entire first year.

A British lady, Gwenda Black, had also been appointed. Alles and Black advocated totally opposite approaches to teacher training. Black's idea was to bring all the lecturers from Britain to start the ZINTEC colleges, since we only had a few qualified and experienced lecturers in Zimbabwe. I refused, Appointing a large number of predominantly foreign staff to develop an innovative Zimbabwe-based education programme was foolish. Even though they could have been academatically better than the Zimbabwean we could recruit, they would not understand the country and the people, and they would have no commitment to change. Furthermore, the programme would not be replicable in the future.

We did not have much money and we wanted to move fast. It was agreed that no buildings would be constructed for the teacher training. We spent time looking for empty buildings we could rent or renovate. If they were inadequate, we put up very cheap pre-fabricated buildings that came to Z$3,000 per classroom. We started in February 1981, as soon as students arrived.

The planning period went from August 1980 to February 1981, and during that period we appointed the first skeleton staff. Advertising yielded 300+ applicants, and we chose 70. Of the 300 applicants only 2 were women, so we appointed the two women. All of them were Zimbabwean. The first 12 came from teacher training colleges and eventually most of these became principals of the colleges. The 70 we recruited were university graduates teaching in secondary schools—the primary section had very few graduates.

We took over buildings in different provinces. For example, in Manicaland we found an empty school—it used to be a Roman Catholic School—that was given to us at minimal rent and eventually sold for a very nominal amount. In Harare we found an empty ex-Colored school.

ZINTEC'S OBJECTIVES

1. To overcome the existing shortage of teachers in order to keep abreast with educational (school) expansion in Zimbabwe.
2. To endow the Zimbabwean teacher with a sense of service to society.
3. To instill a sense of identity with the African socio-historical socialist outlook to life.
4. To develop in the student a sense of learning and teaching.
5. To develop rational thinking in students and staff.

Did the ZINTEC announcement attract enough candidates ?

There were many people interested in joining ZINTEC. Persons who had been working in the industry for several years decided that they really wanted to be teachers. Many

would come into the ZINTEC course because it was paid, so if you had a family, it worked. We recruited a lot of these older students.

What was the rationale behind the pay system ?

We put in a pay system for ZINTEC trainees from the minute they started to teach, after the fourth month of training. It was a really low sum (97 Zimbabwean dollars a month) but as they completed each year of teaching combined with training they got a pay increase. Upon completion, students received a full amount of $450 a month, which was the standard salary of a certified primary teacher in Zimbabwe.

The point is that while they were studying, the trainees were full-time teachers. We also had to put in a pay system from the beginning because, although they were paid, the trainees had to pay for their courses. It was a very nominal fee, but they paid every year. The only part that was free were the 4 months at the beginning and the 4 months at the end.

Anyhow, the pay system made ZINTEC the most popular course, the one every student wanted to enter. Low income families would try to get into ZINTEC rather than any other course.

What were the criteria for the recruitment of teacher candidates ?

I saw ZINTEC as the possibility to bring about change. When we started to recruit staff I made an arbitrary rule: nobody over 50 could be recruited, because I thought people over 50 would not welcome new ideas. We also specified a minimum of 3 years teaching experience for a lecturer, which was very low, in order to attract a younger group.

ZINTEC candidates went through an interview and had to write essays. Academic level was the main criterion. We only recruited people who had five passing grades at O level.

You need to explain that to those who are not familiar with the British school system.

In the British system, O stands for Ordinary Level after 11 years of schooling. After O level, those who are going to the university, would be selected for 2 further years. This is called "A" level, which stands for Advanced level. The British have abandoned this system, but many of the former colonies still keep it, and this is the case in Zimbabwe.

Were you able to find enough candidates with 11 years of *Schooling.*

The first year it was a little difficult, but after that there was a surplus of people with "O" levels.

How about male and female candidates ?

We tried to have an equal number, but we did not quite succeed. Regularly, there are 65% men and 35% women in teacher training institutions.

How about race as a criterion for recruitment ?

There was no rule about race, but most of them were black. There were a few whites, mostly older women.

What were the main ideas and principles that shaped ZINTEC ?

One idea was clear: we wanted our teacher students to get the same university certificate as all teachers. So we made it a 4 year programme: the first 4 months and the last 4 months of the training were residential, and the rest was conducted through distance education. After the initial 16 week intensive residential course, trainees would start teaching in schools and continue to learn through distance study materials and vacation courses. After 10 terms of classroom teaching, they came back for a final residential session. The whole process culminated with a final examination.

The emphasis on the initial residential course was mainly on providing a "survival kit" so that trainees could start teaching with some confidence. There was therefore less emphasis on the theoretical aspects and more on the organization and practical aspects of education.

There were approximately 25 staff responsible for writing the distance learning materials at ZINTEC's National Center. Distance materials were produced in modules. These modules were divided into units, and students had to do a certain number of units each week and complete 3 modules per term. They would all come together for 2 hours a week and discuss their lectures under the guidance of a ZINTEC student who became a leader during the teacher training course. Each term they had to do 3 assignments which they sent in to their district tutor for grading.

In total, 36 modules were produced. At the end the students were asked to write an assignment and to post it, at no cost to the student, to the regional center where it was to be assessed by the field tutors.

It has been said that the distance modules were too complicated for the trainees and for self-study.

It is true. The speed with which the modules were done resulted in very uneven quality. Some modules were just copied from books. Some of them were too theoretical. However, some of them were good and even excellent.

Initially, the Ministry asked UNESCO to provide a director, but by the time they produced names for the director we had done 12 months' work and were already on our third director. Then we asked for assistance to improve the modules, but by the time a list of people was provided to us we had already completed the 36 modules. They were revised and changed in the mid 1980s and again in the 1990s.

At any point did you consider Australian assistance for the distance education component ?

No. We did try and get help from the Cambridge Distance Education College. They came and conducted some one-month courses.

Radio is also mentioned as being utilized by ZINTEC.

The distance education component was mainly print. There was a radio programme once a week, broadcast nationally. The school's radio system had daily programmes for children.

Tell us about ZINTEC structure and administration.

We had the main center operating in the capital, which was responsible for producing and distributing the correspondence materials, as well as for evaluating the overall programme. Then we had 5 provincial administrative centers which looked after the training in each province (Manicaland, Mashonaland, Matabeleland, Midlands and Victoria). These centers were responsible for the submission, selection and placing of students from and to their areas. We also had three college training centers.

College lectures were expected to become field tutors. There was a district tutor for every 30-50 students. This district tutor would visit the students during their distance education period, mark their essays, and conduct weekend and holiday courses through out the 4 years of training. In a way, the weekly discussion sessions became a teacher training course for the whole schools, and ZINTEC training modules became the teacher training modules for the entire school system.

Students were placed in groups of 3. The idea was that they would form a kind of a cluster which would support each other during the 4 years. If we isolated them, many would drop out. Also, it was easier for the district tutor to visit and follow up 3 at a time.

Let us examine the teacher education curriculum. How was it conceived and structured ?

There were four categories of subjects: Professional Educational Foundations (including Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy, and Educational Management); Applied Education (including Arts and Crafts, Music and homocraft), Main Subject Studies (Mathematics, Economic Science, Social Studies, and Religious Knowledge, which were studied through the distance education modules) and Individual Projects (which consisted mainly of child and community observations; during term 10, students were expected to identify a main subject for study and assessment).

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In a way ZINTEC had a fairly conventional teacher curriculum because we were aiming for university recognition. We felt very strongly that if we had a course that was at a lower level, it would have a lower status and lower pay. Because of that constraint we followed a fairly conventional curriculum, much too theoretical.

We inherited the weaknesses of the old system. The old system meant that the university evaluated a teacher training college and certified it. But it allowed the college itself quite a lot of autonomy, and this often resulted in very uneven qualities. In Mozambique we had paid a lot of attention to teaching the teachers how to teach reading. In Zimbabwe colleges paid little attention to reading methodologies, a very critical area. In the ZINTEC course, as it evolved, very practical and important things ended up being treated in a very superficial way. It was partly because of the university influence: everybody was more interested in a higher academic level than on how a 6 year old child learns to read and write.

What was the language policy in teacher training ?

The language of training was English, although we changed the rules in 1980 which called for a passing grade in 5 subjects including a language. Previously it was 5 subjects including English. They have changed it back now. The requirement is now 5 subjects including English because it was said we let in people who were not very good in English.

But teachers also had to teach national languages. Were they supposed to be proficient in national languages.

Yes, The language policy we put in was mother tongue and English from grade 1. Teachers were instructed to teach literacy in the mother tongue. Only in the second term were children expected to start literacy in both languages. It also became compulsory to have one African language in the first 9 grades, so those, whose mother tongue was English would have to do either Shona or Ndebele. These two national languages had to be introduced to everybody by grade 4. The minority language children therefore had to have 3 languages and the majority language children had to have 2 languages.

***Community service* was part of the training curriculum. What were teachers expected to do under this**

ZINTEC students had to do a community service project each year. Most of them did interesting programmes for the parents. Community service was a compulsory part of the ZINTEC course, but it was not evaluated.

Some elements of adult education were included in the curriculum so that teachers could teach adults at night.

Within the community service that they had to do, most ZINTEC trainees would do adult education. They were given some assistance. The materials were developed in 1980. Some church groups developed different materials. More innovative materials, which have to do with empowerment of the village women, were developed later.

Was there any gender component in the training of the teachers ?

No. And there should be one. This is something we could not deliberately bring into the course.

The teacher training curriculum included some practical content and skills—such as gardening.

This came from the Mozambique days when every child was supposed to get an education and be self sufficient, be able to build a house, to make her/his own furniture, or grow her/his own food. After independence it became official policy for every child to do this in both rural and urban areas. In fact, the evaluation of the headmaster's performance noted whether or not this was done.

In the primary school curriculum children were to grow one type of vegetable each year, and in the secondary curriculum they had some aspects of agriculture, which means one year they might rear animals, the next year they might do agriculture. In urban areas, for example, one could keep rabbits. When I was Minister of Education and visited schools, at every school I went to, however poor, everybody had taken up a collection, gone to town and bought a gift. This is a tradition. So I made a new rule which was that no gift could be given that was not made at the school. From then on I got rabbits and vegetables and crafts.

The other big program was planting trees, which was started in 1980. For the first two year 5 million trees were planted—and 5 million tees died. People did not know how to grow trees. In 1983 we did an evaluation that confirmed this. We invested 80,000 Zimbabwe dollars in the programme, arranged for the district education officers to take a five-day course on trees run by the Forestry Commission, and organized prizes in five categories: best nursery, best wood lot for burning, fruit trees, indigenous trees, and best looking garden.

The programme continues. Since school heads are judged by the production programme, the easiest thing they can do is trees. Of course, there is no space to plant any more trees. But the problem is that heads continue to be judged by how many trees they have, rather than on how well Mathematics or Science is learned at their schools.

How do you compare ZINTEC training with the regular training that was offered at Zimbabwe's teacher colleges ?

The university claimed that they were the best academically and also the most highly motivated. But ZINTEC training had its problems. We recruited young lecturers who had 3 or may be 5 years of teaching experience in secondry schools. They were not primary school specialists. I think this was, and continues to be, a big weakness in ZINTEC. The Teacher Education Division has not done enough to ensure that ZINTEC lectures utilize primary school methodologies more effectively.

ZINTEC teachers would be the most go-getting, the most organized but they were not the best trained in terms of teaching methodology.

However, ZINTEC teachers were perceived as the best by parents and communities. During the first 4 years of Independence we allowed the parents to select their own teachers and their own heads of schools. And parents would say they wanted the ZINTEC teacher trainee to be the head of the school. We tried to explain to them that it was not possible for a student to head a school, but they would argue that the ZINTEC student was the best teacher. In my opinion, the reason they were perceived as the best teachers was because of the community service, and the fact that through their distance education and their initial training they were more in touch with new ideas. Also, they were the most motivated.

How much of that teacher motivation was related to the teacher training course, to the candidates themselves or to the context and the time through which Zimbabwe was passing ?

I should think the environment played a more important role than the actual training curriculum.

For 60 or 70 years, blacks had not been allowed to go to school. For many people, education was the meaning of liberation. The first day that the school opened, I saw old men weeping because their children had earlier not been allowed into the schools. That was how people felt about education: it was something they had to have. So the motivation was in the society as a whole, not resting only in the ZINTEC course.

Is the pedagogical weakness of ZINTEC attributable to the training curriculum or to the teacher trainers ?

I think it was mostly a weakness of the trainers. They were very much more conventional in the methodology than those trained in regular teacher-training, where there were primary education specialists.

One can be a primary education specialist and yet be very outdated in one's approaches and methodologies.

That is true, but at that time many primary specialists in Zimbabwe or in Rhodesia for that matter had a more modern methodology. In a way ZINTEC moved away from what had been a breakthrough in the 1960s, which was to introduce play and creativity in the first grades.

What about evaluation and promotion mechanism ? I read that ZINTEC students were offered a second chance if they did not pass the first time

Well, the system operates like that, but it depends on how many times you fail, Following the British system, once you are at the university they make every effort to keep you there until you graduate. If you fail two or three times you are out, but if you fail the first time you are given a second chance.

Trainees underwent central examinations every year. Exams were designed by ZINTEC, and were administered and graded by the field tutors, who also graded the distance learning modules. Final examinations were reviewed by the university.

How many ZINTEC trainees actually received their teacher certificates ?

The majority did. The dropout rate was minimal. I think the main reason for that was the clustering of three students in a group so that, even if there was a weak link in the system, the three students had recourse to the main center: they had the lectures, they had their discussion groups every week and they had their examinations.

One of the five provincial centres was very badly administered. I had an opportunity to visit ZINTEC trainees there and found that they were still able to get a great deal from the course they were doing, even without the district tutor.

After four months of training, ZINTEC trainees started teaching in rural schools. How were they received by the communities ?

They were very warmly received. The community service projects immediately pushed ZINTEC students into leadership roles.

In Zimbabwe there has traditionally been an antagonism between the uneducated and the educated. The educated are seen as arrogant and alienated people who despise the uneducated. ZINTEC trainees put this prejudice into question. In fact, the hostility would have directed at the teachers trained in conventional colleges.

ZINTEC trainees did not divorce themselves from the community. In Zimbabwe, as a result of the colonial heritage, when you go to college or the university you are cut off from your roots for the next three or four years, you are totally alienated from your community. Until 1991 or 1992 university graduates would refuse to work in the underdeveloped areas. We had to staff our rural schools with German and Irish teachers. Our own graduates would be posted to a remote school and they would stay one week and would then disappear. So, In 1988, when I became Minister of Education, I issued a directive that stated that we accepted teachers in January and nobody was allowed to accept another one until May. I issued that directive so that a teacher could not disappear from a rural school and appear in an urban school and be redeployed.

This situation has changed. An important factor was the return of the 300 to 400 teachers trained in Cuba. They left in 1984, spent 5 years in a university course in science subjects, and started returning home around 1990-1991. This first group of students were part of a programme started by President Mughabe and President Fidel Castro to train 400 teachers a year in science subjects. We sent many Zimbabwean lecturers there as well as. We told the students they were going to have very harsh living conditions in Cuba but they would get a good education. That kind of instruction meant that we started recruitment people from the poorer classes.

Partly because of the training and partly because of the recruitment, Cuba-trained teachers immediately went to the worst schools. Cuba-trained teachers became very popular, even with the white schools and the white heads. They are seen as better science teachers, more dedicated, more hard working. This has meant a big change for the education system, because it meant that these rural schools which were staffed by Germans, Canadians or Irish, were staffed for the first time by Zimbabweans. This has also had an impact on the University of Zimbabwe, which finally has had to acknowledge the need to change.

Now it has been decided to transfer the teacher training programme to Zimbabwe. Cuban lecturers will be teaching in Zimbabwe.

What was the situation with the school curriculum when ZINTEC teachers started teaching ?

Before Independence we had two different curricula, a high quality British-type curriculum for whites, and a very poor curriculum for blacks, which had been developed in South Africa the 1930s or 1940s.

The whole primary curriculum was changed in 1982-1983. One single curriculum was established for the whole country, but we allowed a lot of leeway. There was a core curriculum which was compulsory, but there was a lot of room for variation and flexibility. We allowed the old textbooks for 5 years, but publishers were told that they had to change them within that period. We also made a rule that all primary school books would be locally published. This was a big boost for the local editorial industry. It encouraged publishers to print better books and the number of publishers increased from 3 to 24, including local and overseas companies. The overseas companies also set up branches in Zimbabwe.

How were the school curriculum and the teacher curriculum linked ? At the school level there was a new, emerging curriculum that was being experimented with.

The two curricula were not well connected. At one stage teacher education and school curriculum development were in different divisions of the Ministry. In 1983 they were put in the same division to allow for better integration. Unfortunately, in 1988 the President decided to split the Ministry into two; primary and secondary education, and higher education. The measure was quite disastrous in terms of the required integration of teacher curriculum and student curriculum.

ZINTEC teachers were bonded to government service for 4 years upon completion of their training. Did this lead to any problems.

This was the system that applied not only to ZINTEC but to everybody trained in Zimbabwe. Teachers are supposed to serve for the same duration that they were trained.

Actually, for the teachers this did not seem to be a problem; it meant they would be in the teaching service getting full pay. This was a problem for the medical doctors because government service doctors are not well paid, while in the private sector they are highly paid.

Are there any evaluations of the impact of ZINTEC training on student learning, parents and communities, and teachers themselves?

Testing of ZINTEC students showed that they performed better in schools than those graduating from the conventional college. But there are no formal evaluations of ZINTEC performance in the classroom or in relation to parents and communities.

Where are ZINTEC teachers now ?

They are mainly in rural schools and they have remained in leadership positions. Their training led them to never be divorced from their schools, never to be alienated from their environment. The fact that they had to study on their own helped them develop certain skills. ZINTEC teachers will always have an involvement with parents, and they have a greater consciousness of Zimbabwean history.

ZINTEC teachers learned to learn on their own. Do they continue learning on the job ?

There is a big desire and demand by Zimbabwean teachers to improve their qualifications. Whether this is just a desire for the paper certificates or whether it is a real love of learning is a different matter. The fact is that in Zimbabwe there are now around 100 in-service training courses a year which are non-certificated and they are very well attended. Very often teachers have to pay to get in these courses.

ZINTEC is known as a "bridging programme". Why ?

It was originally thought that we would run this programme for 8 or 9 years and obtain the 9,000 trained teachers we had set as a goal. It was conceived as an accelerated teacher training programme to catch up in the early years after independence. In fact we did not catch up—by 1986 ZINTEC had graduated just over 8,000 students—and it continues until now. The ZINTEC center became permanent.

How was the transition between the "original" ZINTEC you have described and the new one.

There were two important changes. One, it was scaled down: around 1989 or 1990 we decided to cut the size from 3 to 2 colleges; at the same time, residential training went from 4 to 8 months. This was not a demand by the students but by the lecturers, who felt that 4 months were not enough.

To some extent the entire teacher system in the country became ZINTECized, because the students and the schools thought that ZINTEC was better.

What do you mean by ZINTECized ?

More in-service and distance education. The regular teacher-training college has one year at college, one year in a school, and one year at college. Residential, on the job, and again residential.

We decided to reduce the number of colleges because we thought we were training too many teachers. In fact, we were not. Together, the conventional colleges and ZINTEC were training 9,000 teachers a year. We assumed we were adding 9,000 teachers a year to the previously existing teachers. But it turned out that we were not because about the same period we started losing 5,000 teachers a year.

This region is very fluid, there are no real borders; people move all the time. In Zimbabwe, for example, we have a lot of Mozambican teachers who are trained in Portuguese but they teach in our schools.

Why would teachers leave Zimbabwe in such big numbers ? Do they find better opportunities in neighboring countries ?

Yes and no. In the late 1980s we did a study of the pay systems in South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe and found that these three counties have similar pay scales. But conditions may be different. Zimbabweans, for example, are obse ssed with cars: cars are a respected symbol. And its much easier to get a car if you work in South Africa or in Botswana. In Botswana, in particular, they have schemes for teachers to get cars. In Zimbabwe you cannot get a car, whether or not you are a teacher. Young people would go and work in Namibia, where salaries are much higher than in South Africa or Botswana.

Are they leaving the country or are they leaving the profession as well ?

Probably a bit of both. The private sector tends to recruit from the teaching service. Instead of taking people from the university or from college they take older people who have had some work experience and good track records as teachers. All sorts of jobs that were not open to blacks before independence are now opening up to blacks. So, Zimbabwe is training 5,000 and losing 5,000 teachers a year. It has become a losing game. We are training for our neighbours.

In the late 1980s it became evident that we were losing a lot of teachers. And that was about the time we started to scale down ZINTEC. Now we probably have to scale it up again.

In your thesis on the education system in Zimbabwe you mention that by 1991 only 41.8% of primary school teachers in the country had the Certificate of Education. Is the new distance education course part of this scaling-up effort ?

This course is conducted by the Commonwealth of Learning with the University of Zimbabwe. The idea is to take the older teachers, particularly those in senior positions, heads and supervisors, and allow them to study for degree courses. It has apparently gone very well. We started it becauses of this problem of losing teachers to our neighbors. If you target a university distance education course to women and to teachers over 35, that group does not move as much as younger teachers.

In your thesis you also mention that there continues to be little information about the real situation of teachers in the country.

Some studies have been conducted. Among the factors that make a teacher stay, availability of in-service training seems to be very attractive and will persuade a teacher to stay even if the pay is not too good. But it remains true that there is inadequate knowledge.Much more is needed.

Will ZINTEC remain a regular part of the teacher education system in Zimbabwe ?

It is likely to remain permanently. Some changes will be necessary, of course, and some have already been introduced.

I don't know if it is that special. It was special in terms of Zimbabwe, which had a very rigid and conventional teacher training system. ZINTEC broke the system, and the utilizers of the system saw ZINTEC as superior, so it placed a lot of pressure on the conventional teacher training institutions. Also, the idea of conducting 75 percent of the course through distance education was an innovation at that time. Before Independence, the entire system was training about 300 or 400 teachers a year, while ZINTEC aimed at training 9,000.

What is innovative about ZINTEC ? Several international publications mention it as something worthlooking at and learning from.

In terms of the teacher training curriculum there was no innovation. ZINTEC used the same curriculum as the other colleges. It was decided that ZINTEC should not have a different curriculum other than the element of community service. It was innovative, however, in that it responded to the need of the time. It was sensitive to the requirements.

A 'model" would mean it is perfect and this is not the case. It is a workable model. It had great success in the Zimbabwean context in term of retention, quality and dedication of the teachers, community recognition and attitude towards teachers. Those are all good aspects. At the same time there are many areas where it could have been very much more improved such as the quality of the distance education modules and the teacher training curriculum in general. This is mainly because we were trying to keep the same content and quality of the college courses so that people would not see ZINTEC as an inferior programme.

Some think of ZINTEC as a model, that is, a model to be replicated elsewhere.

Precisely, This is where we did not innovate. We kept to the same system as before.

What you are saying is that there is a trade-off between the search for official accreditation and the need to be innovative. But this can be solved by changing the curriculum of the teacher education system as a whole.

Some teacher trainers may have Master's degrees but they do not know about the specific situation of the schools and the teachers in the country, even if they are Zimbabweans.

Before Independence education was an elitist activity, so when it was acknowleded it was a human right, available to everyone, there was a need for total change. Ironically in Rhodesia, before Independence, the whites had compulsory primary and secondary education for all whites. White teachers, who were used to dealing with every child having an education, were more sympathetic towards the slow learners and the children with disabilities, and were more used to dealing with parents every day. The black teacher, however, who dealt with only the top 2 or 4 percent of the population, would have no time for less able children, no time for disabled children, and no time for parents. This was part of the legacy of colonialism. And this is the kind of change that is really needed.

I think there was a weakness in the way we recruited our staff. Definitely the lecturers themselves needed training and self-training in terms of methodologies suitable for rural school children. As mentioned earlier, ZINTEC lecturers were recruited mainly from the secondary sector and from a system which was not very innovative. We should have had an in-service Master's degree in primary education for the lecturers while they were lecturing, or let them off for a year to do specialized courses. These were very keen, hard working, talented young people, but they were not able to work in an innovative way.

If ZINTEC were to start again, what should be done differently ?

The distance education modules could have been improved from the beginning. The training of the writers and the testing of the materials was not adequate. We could have had a much closer evaluation of how the students understand the material. The only evaluation in the end was whether or not the students passed the examination.

Linking of the curriculum to the teacher training did occur but it was not enough. The training should have looked much more into the details of science teaching, instead of teaching subject matter in the abstract. The same thing with English. Teacher trainees are supposed to do between 5 and 6 hours of English a week, but they do Shakespeare or Jane Eyre, instead of the practical issues that any teacher has to deal with when teaching language to small children in the classroom. How does a 6 year old child who

has never heard English learn the language ? What is an interesting way to do it ? How should you teach 6 year olds, who have never seen a book, to read and write ? These are the questions teachers need answers for. The teacher's knowledge of English has to be improved, but the whole area of innovative ways to teach English in the early grades is not being touched upon in teacher training.

The whole curriculum needs to be looked at again in terms of the types of systems, processes, and knowledge needed for a mass education system compared to an elitist one. There is still some dislocation. The curriculum was changed quite drastically so that it would cover the type of knowledge and skills that everybody needs in everyday life. But you might find that the teachers have not moved with the curriculum, despite the over 100 in-service training courses a year which teachers can enroll for. For example, Science is so new and unfamiliar to teachers that they are not really able to teach it well. Teachers now realize that they have to perform experiments every time they teach Science, but their knowledge of Science is so poor that children often learn wrong Science through these experiments. These are the dislocations that come from poor training and from a poor grasp of the topic.

And on the administrative side, what would you do differently ? It is acknowledged that ZINTEC had administrative problems.

ZINTEC was large in size, and this made it adminstratively complicated. The structure was fine, in my opinion, but again the training of human resources was weak. A person with a Ph. D may be appointed director, but he or she has never done administration before and does not know how to deal with students scattered in 100, 200 schools.

This programme, because of its nature, required very smart administrators. In this respect, ZINTEC was very uneven, with absolutely brilliant provinces and absolutely bad provinces where students had to struggle on their own.

What would be some of the characteristics of those who did well and those who did poorly ?

The students passed in both cases, so if you were judging by student performance they still performed sufficiently to please the university—which marked their exams--and the district education officers and heads. But if we look at how much feedback the student had from the lecturer, there was a very uneven situation. There were students who had not been visited by the district tutor for a year or two years and who had not had a holiday or a weekend course.

How is ZINTEC viewed in Africa, particularly by Zimbabwe's *teachers.*

Some countries prefer European and conventional standards, and would think ZINTEC is not good enough for them. However, ZINTEC is not low at all, and testing of ZINTEC students revealed that they performed better than teachers graduating from the conventional college. But of course, the notion remains that it is better to do a residential college course for 3 or 4 years than for 4 or 8 months.

What has become very popular is Zimbabwe's secondary system as well as ZIM-science. In secondary education we again deviated from our neighbors, who went for the same conventional system: boarding schools for a small proportion of the population. We refused to build boarding schools and asked communities to build the schools. If they said they wanted a secondary school, they had to do certain things: organize a committee, register the students, build the school themselves, and accept the Ministry's specifications and rules. This scheme allowed us to expand secondary education from 4 per cent to about percent coverage. The scheme features a mixture of face-to-face and distance education.

Since we did not have enough qualified teachers, we produced education kits for several areas: science kits, woodwork kits, metalwork kits, etc. The science kit, in particular, has become very popular. Everybody has taken it and made it their own. Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, and Tanzania took the Zimbabwean science course and adapted it. Some of them have done it better than us.

This did not happen with ZINTEC. It is not a popular model. There are no replicas of ZINTEC anywhere in Africa.

So who made ZINTEC popular ?

Probably United Nations agencies. We definitely did not particularly promote it.

ZINTEC's low cost is mentioned as an attractive feature.

Yes, because it is 40 percent of the cost of the regular teacher training programmes in Zimbabwe. Of course, if you count the stipend we paid to ZINTEC trainees while they were taking the course, you might find ZINTEC has a higher cost. This has never been computed in the cost.

There is very little written about ZINTEC, and what is available is very sketchy

It is probably Zimbabwe's fault. The Ministry itself never promoted it as a model for anynow. We just did it. Also, there was no external funding to ZINTEC after the first UNICEF, Carnegie and Ford grants, so the programme was totally local and there was no need to explain to any donor what we were doing.

ZINTEC has not been properly documented and this is very disheartening. It has been a very good programme, although not without its weaknesses. It was a Zimbabweann response to a Zimbabwean problem. It was very much needed and it made an impact on the old system that was very rigid and elitist. The very fact that ZINTEC was more popular forced the old system to re-invent itself.

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GRENADA

TEACHERS SPEAK

- "Invite outstanding farmers to come in to the school and talk, with their farming clothes on"
- "Children should be taught to use indigenous plant material, e.g. seeds, bamboo, for making toys and ornaments."
- "Give the children a day for selling what they produce and the money to go towards buying seeds, school supplies, for school repairs, or channel produce into own agro-industry project."
- "children should be taught house-building."
- "The woodwork instructor should take a team of boys and go out on weekends or even during their woodwork period doing some repairs to some homes in their village."
- "A work-study programme could find scope for the application of skills such as carpentry, woodwork, masonry, joinery, painting. The teaching of these skills in schools will give citizens a certain self-sufficiency in home maintenance"
- "Teach children ways of preparing their own produce and let them eat it."
- "Involve all children in the preparation of food- boys and girls."
- "Schools should be allowed either to print and circulate a school newspaper, or be allowed to contribute articles for a national unbiased newspaper."
- "Self-expression should be encouraged in children. At the same time educate parents who tend to hush their children up."

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GRENADA

THE NATIONAL IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM (NISTEP)

AND THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DAY PROGRAM (CSDP)

Introduction

In 1979, the New Jewel Movement (NJM)—led by Maurice Bishop—took power in Grenada, a small island in the English-speaking Caribbean (total population 110,000 inhabitants), following nearly three decades of dictatorship under the rule of Eric Gairy. Although Grenada had gained its independence in 1974, the Gairy regime had reinforced colonial tendencies.

This was reflected in a number of ways, including the prevalence of a highly elitist school system: few had access (there were 65 primary schools, one secondary school and one university on the island); costs were high; and entrance to the single secondary school and single university was severely restricted. Overall, the educational scene was characterized by high illiteracy and semi-literacy rates among adults; lack of educational opportunities for children; untrained and underpaid teachers; overpopulated primary schools; and expensive secondary and university education. Both the curriculum and the administration of the school system reflected the British structure, with little regard to the social and cultural history and realities of Grenada.

The new government declared 1980 the "Year of Education and Production". As in other revolutionary processes, education would be a cornerstone of the NJM rule. The government committed itself to democratizing education not only by providing access to all, but also by challenging traditional authoritarian relationships in the classroom, and by promoting participatory mechanisms for consultation among teachers, students and the society at large.

Among the government's first programmes were a national literacy campaign, revision of the primary school curriculum, repair of school facilities, construction of the second secondary school in the country, intensive teacher training, reduction of school fees, provision of scholarships for higher education and vocational training programmes.

Three years later, during the "Year of Political and Academic Education" (1983), a review of the economic, political and social issues led to the conclusion that education was the single most important component for the advancement of Grenada. By then, secondary education was free, a national basic adult education programme was underway, the first promotion of newly-trained teachers was imminent, a variety of work-study programmes were under operation, and more than 200 Grenadians were studying overseas for professional careers.

Building teacher consensus: The National Teachers' Seminar

One of the first steps taken by the NJM government was the National Teachers' Seminar *"A New Kind of Teacher for a New Society."* The seminar, held in January 1980 and convened by the Ministry of Education, was attended by approximately 1,000 teachers. Teachers at all levels of the system were encouraged to analyze the current state of education and to make suggestions for change. This National Seminar was a critical factor in furthering teacher involvement and support in reforming education in the country.

Teachers' suggestions were published in a booklet entitled *"Teachers Speak"*, which would be an important tool in the definition of curricular and pedagogic reform. Although not all of the recommendations were feasible, or applicable at a national level, many ideas

helped shape Grenada's education policies and programmes. Some of those proposals helped define two important and inter-related programmes that will be described herein: the National In-Service Teacher Education Programme (NISTEP) and the Community School Day Programme (CSDP). The programmes were based on the following recommendations by teachers:

- establishing a teacher in-service programme;
- organizing workshops on the teaching of agriculture, crafts and other vocations at the school level;
- holding local follow-up seminars for teachers;
- preparing new curriculum guides and ensuring circulation to all schools; and
- involving the community in the process of developing the curriculum.

The National In-Service Teacher Education Programme (NISTEP)

Although Grenada's single Teachers' College had been operating for nearly 18 years, by 1979, 68 percent of primary school teachers were untrained, and more than 70 percent of secondary school teachers were unqualified. Because of low salaries and lack of incentives, the majority of the 25 teachers who graduated annually from the Teachers' College stopped working as such within a short time. Most considered teaching as a means of subsistence, a temporary job while getting something better or an avenue out of the country. Many viewed the school as a place for intellectual work, and rejected any possibility of including agriculture or crafts within the school curriculum.

The **National In-Service Teacher Education Programme** (NISTEP) was initiated in October 1980 to train primary school teachers, who numbered about 550 at the time. The planning stage was extensive and involved many players in the educational arena. Meetings were held in every parish for teachers and headmasters to discuss the programme proposals. Workshops were held with representatives of the Grenada Teachers' Union, Teachers' College and the University of the West Indies' (UWI) School of Education, to discuss the feasibility of the programme and ways in which to structure it for accreditation by the university. Some UWI officials were skeptical of the programme's viability. The teachers' main concern was that the programme would not be accredited. Finally, UWI agreed to pilot the programme, with the understanding that it would be oriented towards preparing teachers to obtain certification from the university.

NISTEP's goals were to:

- improve pedagogical practices in the classroom;
- increase student achievement outcomes;
- standardize textbooks and develop a national curriculum;
- develop and organize training materials for teacher education;
- upgrade the status of the teaching profession.

NISTEP was managed by a staff of 18 full-time and seven part-time tutors, with expertise on specific subjects. Primary schools teachers attended NISTEP one day per week, and during the rest of the week they put into practice in their classrooms what they had learned, under the supervision of teacher-partners, who were qualified teachers.

During the first two years, language arts, mathematics and education were included in the NISTEP curriculum. Social studies, science, agriculture and health education were added in 1983. NISTEP workshops familiarized participants with the new educational policies and gave them an opportunity to build on what they had already developed. *Teachers Speak* was required reading for both trainers and trainees.

Teacher-partners guided and assisted the trainees. They attended at least two lessons presented by the trainees and assessed their performance against standards set by UWI. This on site assessment facilitated reflection, analysis and improvement of pedagogical practice.

TEACHERS SPEAK

- *"Invite outstanding farmers to come in to the school and talk, with their farming clothes on"*
- *"Training in woodwork, arts and craft to be provided in school. Perhaps some skilled vendors employed to teach."*
- *"Organize field trips to see road construction."*
- *"Expose children to seaport activity, field trips"*
- *"Children should be taught to use indigenous plant material, e.g. seeds, bamboo, for making toys and ornaments."*
- *"Give the children a day for selling what they produce and the money to go towards buying seeds, school supplies, for school repairs, or channel produce into own agro-industry project."*
- *"In the handicraft department of a school children should be taught house-building."*
- *"The woodwork instructor should take a team of boys and go out on weekends or even during their woodwork period doing some repairs to some homes in their village."*
- *"A work-study programme could find scope for the application of skills such as carpentry, woodwork, masonry, joinery, painting. The teaching of these skills in schools will give citizens a certain self-sufficiency in home maintenance"*
- *"Information on roads could be incorporated into several areas of the curriculum: Social Studies, Mathematics (i. e. costs. measurement, etc.)"*
- *"Children can help in road repairs especially on roads leading to their school. Schools should get into community work. Children can for example collect and sell stones for road repair"*

- *"Educate children fully about the new international airport: cost, funding, advantages disadvantages"*
- *"Involve children in the building of the airport via schools' saving unions, sale of produce from school gardens, sale of school handicraft—money contributed to airport bonds"*
- *"In the Infant Department: simple experiments i.e. looking at seeds germinate in a bottle, or giving infants the responsibility of a small kitchen garden."*
- *"Teach children ways of preparing their own produce and let them eat it."*
- *"Involve all children in the preparation of food- boys and girls."*
- *"Children can themselves prepare fruit juices for school breaks."*
- *"Different sections of the working people should be used to teach each other, e.g. farmer lecturing to teacher."*
- *"Schools should be allowed either to print and circulate a school newspaper, or be allowed to contribute articles for a national unbiased newspaper."*
- *"Education should prepare people for decision-making and should produce a situation where all use can help shape the policy of our country. For this we need to be informed."*
- *"Children should be exposed to democracy in schools. Encourage democratic discussions."*
- *"Self-expression should be encouraged in children. At the same time educate parents who tend to hush their children up."*

Part of NISTEP's mandate was to evolve as the focal point for developing the new national curriculum. NISTEP subject panel tutors were responsible for working with teachers to develop the new curriculum. This link between professional development and curricular reform provided NISTEP a unique strength and a powerful approach to teacher education.

The Community School Day Programme (CSDP)

CSDP emerged as a complementary programme to NISTEP. During the day that teachers were attending their training, community members were invited to "own" the schools, act as "substitute teachers", and lead cultural and educational activities at the school and /or at their places of work.

The impetus for CSDP came from some of the teachers' recommendations published in *Teachers Speak:*

- *"The schools should provide training in handicrafts, woodworking and other vocations."*
- *"There should be field trips."*
- *"Children should be exposed to the working environments of fishermen, road construction crews and others."*
- *"Students should learn how to use plant materials for making toys, ornaments and other useful objects."*
- *"Children should be taught food and beverage preparation."*
- *"Government officials should come to the schools, so that the students can learn more about government."*

Recommendations such as these reinforced the government's belief that education should be the responsibility of the government as well as of the people. Slogans such as *"If you know, teach; if you don't, learn"* and *"Each one, teach one"* were spread throughout Grenada to heighten collective consciousness on the importance of education and the collective effort required to reform it. This same spirit animated housewives, farm workers, artisans, fishermen, artists, and other community members to share their skills with school students, and made CSDP feasible.

The activities and knowledge shared on CSPD days covered a wide range of subject, areas and activities. Both girls and boys were involved in all activities, so as to avoid gender differentiation in terms of conventional male and female roles. Some activities carried out during that one day a week, when the teacher was absent, included:

- cleaning of the school and community;
- field trips to historic or archaeological sites, or to new development projects;
- work assignments with and/or visits to local industries, professional organizations and government offices;
- story-telling or story-reading, dances, songs, theater, puppets, painting, and other forms of culture;
- learning trades, such as masonry, auto mechanics, fishing, basket weaving, and cooking; and
- lectures by community persons in the public sector, business and civic organizations.

CSDP was critical in (a) introducing students to the world of work; (b) preparing them to be participants in the process of national development; (c) linking school and community in an effective manner, with *"community participation"* acquiring a new and more relevant meaning; (d) involving the community and the students in joint development projects; and (e) through all these means, providing invaluable inputs and insights to the curriculum development process. The introduction of peer teaching where there were insufficient volunteers from the community was also an important, unexpected development in many schools.

The programme operated through parish coordinators who assisted schools with planning, logistics, organization and material support, as well as in identifying resource persons. A steering group comprised of representatives from various governmental ministries (education, health, development, etc) served a coordinating function and provided institutional support to the programme.

Locally, CSPD broadened the traditional Parent-Teacher Associations into Community School Councils. The Councils coordinated the school and community inputs, and served to organize those who volunteered their time and knowledge to the school.

Through participation in CSDP, the students' production improved, and crafts, toys and other items were sold to the Grenadian handicraft enterprise (GRENCRAFT), which was created in 1981. Article of straw, wood, fabric, toys, etc. were exhibited and sold, the proceeds of which benefitted the programme. Several national and two international exhibits were organized with CSDP products. An agricultural school gardens project in 12 primary schools was also created with Oxfam-Canada funding.

CSDP was decentralized in nature, and depended heavily on the quality of cooperation between school and community. Many variables thus affected the performance of this programme: the attitude of school staff and students; the organizational ability of the community programme coordinators; and the commitment of the school headmaster, who remained at the school on CSDP day. The better the headmaster's relationship with the school staff and the community, the more successful the programme became. Dynamic headmasters were creative and dedicated, visiting the volunteers at their homes, holding frequent meetings with the Community School Council, structuring activities well and employing democratic administrative measures.

Through participation in CSDP, student enthusiasm in vocational trades grew, and with it teacher interest in learning more about agriculture, crafts, and manual work in general. Although CSDP was originally envisioned as a means of occupying students while their teachers received training. CSDP became a highly inspiring example of productive integration between work and study, and between the school and the community.

Accomplishments and limitations

The New Jewel Movement (NJM) government aimed at tying education with daily reality and orienting it towards transforming such reality, based on the unity of intellectual and manual labour, theory and practice, school and community. NISTEP and CSDP contributed to these principles, although they did not achieve all the intended goals.

NISTEP

NISTEP trainees improved their knowledge and skills in key areas and helped to shape the new national curriculum. For the first time in Grenada, teachers' opinions and experiences were valued, and teachers were viewed as key to national development.

NISTEP provided educational and professional opportunities for untrained teachers on a national scale—the first programme of its kind in the English-speaking Caribbean. However, an evaluation of the teacher trainees in 1983 raised several areas of concern: some called for the reinstatement of the Teacher's College model; others suggested that the workload of the trainees be reduced; the largest number of suggestions related to improving logistical support to the programme, such as through the provision of transportation, ability grouping for teachers, and better relationships with and more access to teacher-trainers and tutors.

By 1983, 350 primary teachers were attending NISTEP and had received pay increments and an upgrading of their status. From the inception of the programme, 184 trainees,

- *"Children and the community should be aware of all types of social systems. so that they can draw their own conclusions."*
- *"Develop a school policy. Show pupils how the policy of the school can be related to the communities and then the world."*
- *"Give children information on, and contact with, children of other Third World countries."*
- *"Children should be permitted and encouraged to set their own standards. Children should make class rules."*
- *"More space on time table for agriculture, not just a Friday afternoon subject."*
- *"Tourism to be included under Social Studies."*
- *"Develop positive attitudes towards tourists;see the tourist as a person just like oneself, not a 'whiteman', a millionaire, or a money machine."*
- *"Tourists should be invited to visit schools, whenever practicable."*
- *"Teach children a little about the tourists country, give them an idea of their language and geography."*
- *"Children in the fishing areas should be engaged in actual fishing and marketing fish."*
- *"Teach children boat-building theory."*
- *"Make students aware of the vast amounts spent on imported meats and the dire need for development of our own livestock industry in order to boost the economy."*
- *"Involve children in livestock rearing: infants could rear chickens; juniors sheep, goats; seniors, cows"*

(34.5 percent) had dropped out of the programme for various reasons. However, for some, the attrition was a positive development since it identified early on (rather than at a later stage) those individuals who were not ready to make a commitment to change or who were not prepared to be teachers.

NISTEP was cost-effective. The three-year Teachers' College Programme (1977-1979) amounted to $ 5,659 per student per year whereas NISTEP costs (1981-1983) came to $1,848. Additionally, NISTEP trainees had 117 weeks of practice teaching with 39 opportunities for evaluation by a visiting tutor and 117 by a teacher partner over the three-year training period. In comparison, those in the Teachers' College had 18 weeks of student teaching and only 18 evaluations. Teachers' College trainees received 93 hours of annual training in language arts, mathematics and education. NISTEP teachers had 120 hours in mathematics and language, and 148 in education per year.

NISTEP suffered logistical problems. Staff had heavy schedules and numerous tasks: training teachers, developing the training materials, supervising the trainees in class, and defining new roles for teachers and ideas for changing the conventional curriculum standards. Work overload and time constraints resulted in overlooking some quality aspects.

CSDP

CSPD had been conceived as being closely associated with the curriculum development process, but this goal was not fully achieved mainly due to insufficient human and financial resources for conducting the necessary research and follow up.

In schools where the programme was well-organized, CSDP yielded excellent results. In general, CSDP was better received and given greater support in rural areas than in urban ones. Rural families and communities were more willing to give of their time, and exhibited a stronger sense of volunteerism. CSDP worked more efficiently when the school headmaster was dynamic and had a good relationship with community members. The success of the programme thus varied from area to area.

In general, CSDP lacked sufficient resources to achieve all its goals. Much of the administration was the responsibility of the Community School Councils, whose members had little or no experience in programme development, classroom management and supervision. Much of the work involved in mobilization of volunteers therefore became the responsibility of school headmasters and Parish Coordinators. The government-level steering group, although committed to the process, could not guarantee the support of the individual ministries to the extent needed to ensure an effective programme. Insufficient training, coordination and financial support were the strongest limitations of the programme.

Conclusion

During the NJM government (1979-1983) educational programmes for improving teacher education had an overall positive impact throughout Grenada. When US troops entered Grenada on October 25, 1983, structures and educational programmes developed by the NJM government were discontinued and expatriate professionals working on these programmes, mainly from other countries in the English-speaking Caribbean had to leave the country. American volunteers relieved teachers of their duties, and brought in a new curriculum. Adjustments recommended for NISTEP and CSDP were thus not made, nor can their long-term effectiveness be evaluated.

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- *We need to be informed about Grenada's foreign and economic policies, in order to participate actively in national life."*
- *"Different ministers or their staff could visit schools and address students on their policies"*
- *"The Ministries should provide schools with all their plans and statistics."*
- *"Ministry of Education should get newspapers and other literature from progressive countries to supply to teachers."*
- *"Teachers should have free access to the Government Gazette."*
- *"Finance officials should hold workshops with teachers. "*
- *"Newsletter on Foreign Policy should be distributed to schools."*
- *"A booklet consisting of definitions, terms and abbreviations relevant to foreign policy should be made available to teachers for the benefit of teachers and pupils."*
- *"A weekly half-hour radio programme on Grenada's foreign policy."*
- *"Teachers need to prepare themselves before implementing this."*
- *"Teachers should try to remove the shackles of colonialism from themselves before they try to help the children in that exercise."*

ZAMBIA

SHAPE's concept of *education with production* underscores the integration of intellectual and manual work, of theory and practice. Productive work is regarded as both an economic tool (generating income) and as a pedagogic tool (an opportunity to apply skills and knowledge that are a part of the curriculum).

Each school is regarded as a *production* unit, and productive activities are viewed as having an economic, educational, social and cultural value. Productive activities at college level serve to demonstrate what is possible in primary schools, in terms of types of activities, technologies, organisation and management. Colleges are responsible for in-service training, curriculum development related to production, and the exchange of ideas and experiences.

All colleges and schools are likely to feature one or more production projects in agriculture, crafts or home economics. Most of the work is undertaken outside school hours and involves all students. The selection of productive activities is linked to their educational value, the availability of resources, the potential and interest of the teachers, and the need of the school and community.

Desk repair is a specific project developed within SHAPE. It was started with the aim of resolving the problem of shortage of seating facilities, while at the same time providing new status to manual work in the school context and giving students an opportunity to take part in the repair of their own desks and to learn in the process.

In the framework of SHAPE activities, 4,000 out of Zambia's 4,750 primary schools now have economic production units and school furniture repair facilities.

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ZAMBIA

THE SELF-HELP ACTION PLAN FOR EDUCATION (SHAPE)

The Self-Help Action Plan for Education (SHAPE), launched in 1986, is an innovation within the primary school system in Zambia. The programme covers the entire country with support from the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA). Based on the philosophy of 'education with production' and defined as a "process-oriented programme and not a product-oriented one", SHAPE seeks to enhance the capacity of schools and colleges for self-help through the development of *resource work* and *production work.*

SHAPE's essential message is the critical importance of building a human (rather than a physical) infrastructure and network, and strengthening professional teacher development in order to achieve an improved and sustainable education system.

SHAPE believes that quality and sustainability in education are not a primarily financial problem; the most critical factor for sustainability is the effectiveness of the programme at the school level. The key thus lies in changing the attitudes of teachers, students and other educational partners, so as to develop a *'culture of innovation'* rather than to seek improvements through isolated innovations.

SHAPE is characterised by a number of key features:

- it is *integrated* within the regular school system and is related to *both Ministries of Education:* the Ministry of General Education, Youth and Sport; and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology;
- it assigns two related and mutually supportive roles to schools and colleges: to serve as *resource centres* and as *production units;*
- it is *field-based;*
- planning and management are meant to be *adaptive* and *learning-based;*
- it is intended that the programme be planned and managed by *teachers,* to facilitate professional teacher growth and autonomy, and provide teachers an opportunity to transform schools into centres of educational experimentation;
- its organisational structure is *decentralised* and *participatory,* aimed at building partnerships at the local level among students, teachers, administrators, parents, communities, and development agencies;
- it works towards establishing an *effective network* of professional support services, linking the school with the zone, district, regional and national levels;
- its In-Service Teacher Training (INSET) model is on site and is essentially based on *teachers mutual professional support;* and
- *teacher colleges* are linked to SHAPE and are considered the *hubs of INSET activities* in their regions.

The overall guiding principle is the development and exercise of *self-reliance* and *resourcefulness* by teachers, schools and colleges.

Acknowledging that most of the innovations proposed by SHAPE were already being implemented by schools and individual teachers in various parts of the country, it was decided that rather what was needed was a coherent programme to encourage,

institutionalise and expand such innovations within the entire system. It was decided that all resources that were made available to the programme from the Ministries of Education, from either external or internal sources, would be released only to support self-help activities and to encourage professional and institutional initiatives.

Zambia's education system

Since Independence, in 1964, the provision of primary and junior secondary education for all children has been a permanent goal of the Zambian government. Basic education currently comprises of a 9 year cycle divided into three stages: lower basic (grades 1-4); middle basic (grade 5-7); and upper basic (grades 8-9). Primary education covers the first two stages; the third stage comprises junior secondary education; and senior secondary education goes from grades 10 to 12.

Zambia has 9 provinces, 62 districts, 575 zones and 4,750 primary schools. The gross enrolment rate for the 7-13 age-group is estimated at 88 per cent and 91 per cent of grade 4 children continue into upper primary school. Repetition rates are high, especially in grades 4 and 7. The enrolment of girls in both urban and rural areas has maintained a historical trend towards parity with boys at the primary level, but a gap persists at the secondary level.

Primary schools in urban areas tend to have overcrowded classrooms, while many rural classes are under-enroled. Most primary schools operate a double shift system at grades 1-4. In urban areas, three shifts a day are common at this level, with two shifts operating at the upper primary level. There is still a widespread shortage of teachers in many rural and urban schools, and 15 per cent of employed teachers are untrained.

The origins of SHAPE

From 1974 to 1977 Zambia undertook an education reform that is considered the first comprehensive effort by Zambians to review their inherited education system. In line with the reform recommendations, school-based in-service training activities were initiated in various parts of the country during the early 1980s. School-based teacher centres were established and resource activities were organised at district and school levels. Teachers were encouraged to improve themselves professionally to enable them to take a greater role in educational development and to provide schools a stronger base for self-reliance.

"SHAPE aims to discover the possibilities for change at all levels and create a method capable of bringing relevant education and innovation to schools" (L. Musonda, Executive Secretary of SHAPE.)

SHAPE emerged from these early efforts. Rather than ignoring the reforms that had been attempted in the country in the 1970s, SHAPE tried to build on those efforts. Two expatriates worked with officials from both Ministries of Education to prepare the SHAPE proposal.

HOW DOES SHAPE OPERATE?

The structure

SHAPE operates within the Ministry of Education but in a semi-autonomous manner. It was decided not to create a separate project implementation structure. All responsibilities were thus given to staff already serving at various levels within the Ministries of Education. School headmasters and teachers served as coordinators for various SHAPE activities or resource centres. Specific appointments have been made to the post of Executive Secretary and some support staff. SHAPE has defined also new roles for conventional officers, especially inspectors.

The SHAPE structure includes a variety of institutions. The five-member *National Secretariat* has an Executive Secretary and four coordinators who are senior inspectors

of schools, *Regional committees* have representatives from regional colleges and the provincial education office, and are supported by *district committees.* Finally, there are the *zone* and *school-based teacher centre committees* that operate at the sub-district level.

Model schools identified in various districts and zones function as centres of good SHAPE practice. *Zone centre schools* are chosen on the basis of their accessibility to other schools in the zone. The human resources animating this structure comprise of a large variety of *specialised teachers and coordinators. Resource teachers* are the main SHAPE coordinators at school level. *Zone coordinators*—for INSET and production work—coordinate SHAPE activities at some five or ten schools and create a network of support for teachers at the zone level.

"Every little school in Zambia is aware of what other schools are doing" (E. Banda, SHAPE Secretariat).

Main components of SHAPE

Organisational development Regions, districts, zones, colleges and schools are assisted in developing SHAPE coordinating committees in accordance with issued guidelines. The purpose is to establish a national infrastructure for teachers, administrators and inspectors to work together as colleagues.

Curriculum development Supplementary teaching and learning materials are designed and produced at various levels.

Staff development Pre-and in-service training is provided to field staff.

Monitoring, evaluation and research Coordinating committees are assisted in developing monitoring instruments and procedures for local research and evaluation.

Material support Committees are provided with materials and equipment, tools for production, transportation and financial support.

SHAPE activities

SHAPE activities include:

- organising a SHAPE network involving teachers, inspectors and college tutors. Teachers, together with communities, define their needs and ideas on education;
- on-the-job training of teachers through INSET;
- curriculum planning and development for adaptation to local contexts;
- the establishing of committees or clusters at school, zone, district, regional and national level;
- training sessions to familiarise regions with SHAPE objectives, principles and methodologies;
- exploring the potential for improving on-going innovations and initiating new ones;
- informing teachers and officials of innovations carried out within and outside Zambia;
- supporting resource and production work in selected colleges, schools and districts.
- providing procedures and tools for local monitoring;
- encouraging local school committees to gather materials for SHAPE activities (tools, vehicles, equipment, books);

- creating resource centres to function as focal points for the dissemination of SHAPE ideas; and

- preparing SHAPE guidelines for schools.

Education with production

"Because it is driven by necessity, the SHAPE programme makes people work and achieve" (J. Christensen, Senior Programme Officer Education, SIDA).

SHAPE's concept of *education with production* underscores the integration of intellectual and manual work, of theory and practice. Productive work is regarded as both an economic tool (generating income) and as a pedagogic tool (an opportunity to apply skills and knowledge that are a part of the curriculum).

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***Resource work, resource* teachers and *resource* centres**

The concept of *resource work,* derived from the education reform document, refers to activities organised by teachers using local resources to improve the quality of education. These activities include an informal in-service training (INSET) and the local design and production of supplementary teaching and learning materials. Such activities take place in all school-based teacher centres and enable teachers to take the initiative in their professional development, specifically by providing them with opportunities to plan, formulate, organise and run meetings, seminars, and workshops; conduct research; and share ideas and experiences towards improving the education system.

Teachers who introduce innovations in curriculum and pedagogy are termed *resource teachers,* model and specialised teachers and SHAPE coordinators. A *resource school* is any school that implements innovations in curriculum development, materials and teaching methods.

Resource centres are of four types :

- **National Institutions** such as the University of Zambia (UNZA); the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC); and the National In-Service Training College (NISTCOL). These institutions perform an experimental function: they experiment with new materials and initiate new ideas. NISTCOL conducts advanced courses (of one year duration and above), workshops, seminars and conferences for the upgrading of different categories of personnel; it also advises and supports the regional teachers' colleges in their role in INSET.

- **Regional institutions** Regional teacher colleges play a vital role in the SHAPE programme. Their activities include conducting short course for teacher upgrading; organising workshops and seminars for a variety of personnel; providing resource persons for teacher centres and resource centres; acting as centres for information and advice for all education personnel in the region; and conducting research and development work in curriculum, teaching-learning materials and methods, and school production work.

- **District institutions** District, together with school-based centres, are in charge of various activities: identifying training needs; running INSET and resource work activities; monitoring professional and production activities; undertaking research and evaluation; initiating as well as responding to needs of schools and individual teachers; holding monthly and term-based meetings, reviews, and year-end meetings; housing and organising materials to support curriculum development; facilitating teacher participation in professional support services; and offering audio-visual facilities to schools.

- **School-level institutions** Schools are viewed as places where teachers work together and meet not only for administrative reasons but for professional cooperation and exchange. A central school in each zone (5-10 schools) function as a teacher centre for the entire zone. Zone and school-based teacher centres provide opportunities for teachers to meet and discuss their work, identify problems and find solutions to such problems, prepare materials and produce teaching aids which are evaluated by specialists at the CDC and the university.

"The parents feel the schools belong to them too and this feeling of ownership spreads to the community" (Mrs. Lwara, Lusaka Provincial Chairperson for SHAPE).

Any school can become a *resource centre,* if strategically located and if teachers so desire. The school-based resource centre is a room built by students and teachers, or set aside at the school, with reference books, teaching aids and a variety of objects that might be useful in the teaching-learning process. An INSET coordinator or senior teacher is in charge of this room, which is meant to be multifunctional, for use by students, teachers, school staff and community members. These rooms are often the office of the deputy-head or a senior teacher. The *resource centres* are the venue for SHAPE committee meetings, INSET training sessions, and school clusters seminars. Participants who walk from distant schools also sleep here overnight.

Schools and colleges are encouraged to undertake inter-school, inter-college, and inter regional *study visits,* as well as visits to counterpart organisations and programmes in other African countries. The study tours aim at enabling SHAPE officers to gain experience and to identify good practices in resource and production work within and outside Zambia.

Interaction between *resource work* and *production work*

At the core of SHAPE's philosophy is the belief that *resource work* and *production work* complement and reinforce each other: improved productivity in school or college productive work can only occur if teachers improve their skills through resource work. Conversely, production, if successful in generating finance for the school or college, can be used for professional improvement. The concept is geared towards enabling SHAPE committees to continue funding their own activities in schools and colleges so that they can be self reliant upon withdrawal of external funds.

Initially, teachers and school staff were unclear on how to integrate production and education into the curriculum. Yet, over time, teachers, parents and students have become increasingly engaged in small-scale construction and repair activities, and have developed agricultural projects to generate income.

At this point, however, there is a noticeable emphasis on the *production* side rather than on the *pedagogical* side of the *'education with production'* philosophy, and SHAPE authorities and staff are aware of this. An important contributing factor has been the worsening economic situation and the consequent reduction in financial support to

education, which has led to an overemphasis on the economic side to the detriment of the academic and pedagogic activities within schools.

SHAPE's implementation process

SHAPE began implementation on 1 January 1987. The first phase (1987-1989) concentrated on building a SHAPE organisation structure including schools, colleges, zones, districts and regions, through which administrators, inspectors, lecturers, teachers, students and parents could work together. The National SHAPE Secretariat was responsible for introducing SHAPE ideas and structure in every basic education school and pre-service primary teacher training college.

"The SHAPE programme is the most successful programme ever put in place by a ministry in Zambia, both in terms of its efficiency and its longevity" (Mr. C. Zulu, Chief Inspector of Schools).

The first phase included:

- establishing committees at various levels;
- disseminating SHAPE purpose and principles;
- providing regional leadership training;
- training of resource teachers in various subjects of the curriculum;
- exploring the potential for improving ongoing activities and initiating new ones;
- preparing guidelines;
- undertaking study tours to countries implementing similar programmes;
- initiating support to resource and production work in selected colleges, schools and districts.

Foreseeable problems emerged in the context of programme that attempted to introduce new ways of thinking and operating, and new approaches to administrative and pedagogical management in the school system. The concept of equality in collective decision-making by professionals with differing status in the educational hierarchy was resisted by those in more senior positions. The zone committees, in which heads of schools were members, began to be chaired by classroom teachers who were appointed zone coordinators, and most heads found it difficult to accept such leadership. The encouraging of collective decision-making by teachers and their supervisors met with strong resistance from a traditional supervisory mentality that sees teachers as obedient and lower ranking individuals.

The appointment of coordinators in the early stages was largely *ad hoc*. Role conflicts emerged between SHAPE coordinators and senior teachers who were not given responsibilities in the SHAPE structure. At the same time, SHAPE coordinators who were also full-time teachers were overworked. The National Advisory Committee met twice during its life span.

Several adjustments were introduced based on problems and experiences gained during the initial stages, and on an evaluation of the programme conducted in 1993. Zone meetings are now chaired by the heads of the zone schools, and no longer by classroom teachers. The permanent secretaries of the two ministries and the University of Zambia (School of Education) became involved in policy decisions for the programme.

An important shift was introduced in strategies for the dissemination of new ideas promoted by SHAPE. Initially, the strategy involved introducing SHAPE in every school and responding to initiatives from the schools regarding materials support. Evidence soon demonstrated that such strategy was in fact contributing to further inequity. In order to spread growth points evenly, it was decided that centre schools would act as satellites for the dissemination of good practice. Efforts to improve research and monitoring skills of SHAPE personnel were also intensified and guidelines prepared for that purpose.

During the second phase of the programme (1990-1993) SIDA, as the principal SHAPE donor, began to express concerns about sustainability. SIDA supplied a large portion of

the recurrent budget and it was unclear whether the government could take over when financial support came to an end. Thus the main organisational objectives of the second phase were:

- integrating the activities of the programme into the mainstream structures and activities of the Ministries of Education;
- beginning to transfer responsibility for some recurrent costs from SIDA to the Zambian government; and
- developing other mechanisms to ensure sustainability.

Professional training and development

Two years of pre-service training were considered insufficient to ensure the teacher profile required through effective resource and production work at the school level. An induction and in-service training programme was devised that would take into account both the human side of the teacher's role and the instructional aspects of the teacher's task *(see INSET Objectives)*.

In order to improve the quality of teaching and learning, SHAPE encourages the development of a cadre of *resource teachers* in all subjects. These subject resource teachers are appointed by inspectors to support curriculum development in the various subject areas. Appointments are contingent on competence and proven knowledge in their subjects, with additional training provided by the programme.

In the subsidising of regional and district seminars and workshops, priority is given to meetings of resource teachers and other key education personnel. The SHAPE Secretariat is responsible for the training of trainers and of teachers at national and regional levels, while Regional Committees organise training for district cadres. Materials, equipment and transport are provided for regions, colleges and districts down to the zone level.

School-based training activities focus on the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes required to internalise the new approaches and methodologies at the classroom, school and community level. Changes in teachers attitudes and roles have had an impact on the role of inspectors, key to any sustainable school reform. The traditional inspector's role is gradually being changed to a more technical and advisory role, where inspectors collaborate with teachers more than simply control them.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

Reports on SHAPE's development and achievements, both internal and external, agree on the innovativeness and overall positive contribution of SHAPE to sustainable education reform in Zambia, despite the country's difficult conditions and the numerous problems faced by the programme over these last few years. Such reports include an evaluation of SHAPE conducted in February-March 1993 to analyse its development and suggest eventual corrective measures for future direction of the programme. This evaluation was conducted through an examination of documents; field visits to over 40 primary schools and primary teacher training colleges, district and provincial offices in 18 districts spread over five provinces, and interviews with Ministry of Education officials, members of the SHAPE Secretariat, staff of the University of Zambia, and representatives of the Zambian National Union of Teachers (ZANUT) and international agencies.

Among SHAPE's achievements, the following have been acknowledged:

- SHAPE has created a nationwide organisational structure in all education institutions. Such structures have proved useful for developing greater professional responsibilities among teachers and encouraging local initiatives towards educational improvement.

INSET OBJECTIVES

(a) Schools and colleges

- To respond to the particular needs of individual schools or groups of schools.
- To help teachers identify professional needs and articulate these so that they can result in a programme of support at school or other level.
- To help teachers with the planning organisation and sustained support needed for successful school-based in-service activities.

(b) Teachers and students

- To initiate activities which encourage teachers to focus reflectively and critically upon their classroom practice.
- To respond to the concept of goal setting, evaluation and appraisal in relation to the whole school, the individual teacher and the child.
- To promote classroom practice which enables teachers to help children to be willing, effective and independent learners.
- To help teachers lead their students to adopt a more practical and active approach to their learning.
- To promote the use of first hand experience as starting point for learning.
- To offer opportunities for teachers to be learners and to reflect upon the business of being a learner and upon the circumstances which support or inhibit learning.

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- The zoning of schools has provided small schools with opportunities for interacting with other schools in resource and production activities.
- Teachers show enthusiam and willingness to accept new responsibilities for the benefit of their students and schools. A formal recognition of their efforts and an endorsement of their intiatives have provided teachers and inspectors with a major incentive to remain in their work and enhance their professional development.
- Teachers' professional dependency is on the decline. There are signs of increased teacher initiative and ability to identify local resources and potential for teaching-learning purposes, as well as to identify their training needs. They have begun to develop the habit of doing things together rather than solving their problems in isolation.
- Ministry of Education authorities have formally recognised the importance of teachers' contribution to educational development. SHAPE has provided an appropriate philosophy, structure and mechanisms to enable bottom-up approaches to identify and respond to teachers' needs.
- Provision of material assistance to field officers is already bearing fruit in terms of improved mobility and communication.
- There is a noticeable improvement in the interaction among teachers, tutors, inspectors, administrators and community representatives or local authorities. Teachers and parents have responded well to the financial crisis and have been active in mobilising local resources to support the education of their children. Participation in self-help projects in schools has introduced a new sense of responsibility among students, parents and teachers. A new spirit of school-community partnership is also a qualitative achievement of SHAPE.
- *Self-reliance* has become a key word in education and there is significant evidence of self-reliance at school-community level. Many institutions are able to support their own resource and production activities. Teachers, parents and students have developed greater interest in production activities in schools, partly as a result of the economic benefits these have produced for the schools, and partly because, in the current economic situation, self-employment has become increasingly attractive as a future option. For teachers, engaging in production has provided experiences that they can also apply at home to improve their personal lives.
- Study visits have proven useful. Mud desks were introduced as a result of a visit to Ethiopia, and a tailor-made course for agricultural coordinators was developed as a result of a study visit to Tanzania.
- Overall, with regard to resource work and human development, the 1993 evaluation team found that a significant number of school-based, self-help professional development and support activities were taking place at the school, zone and district level. These activities include annual or quarterly workplans; school and zone-based seminars and workshops; the development of various kinds of resource centres; the overcoming of the isolation of schools and teachers; increased teacher initiative, self-reliance, and sense of autonomy: the development of teaching and learning materials; and a genuine sense of the need for, and the sustainability of, resource work and of professional development activities. In general, the evaluation team commented on the remarkable level of knowledge about, interest in, and activities supportive of SHAPE resource work.

In order to assess if and how the enhanced motivation and back-up support has led to higher-quality local resource activities and to improved classroom practice, a research committee was commissioned to undertake an assessment of learning achievement. It would be unrealistic to expect spectacular and widespread changes in classroom relationships, practice and outcomes in such a short period of time, and considering that

(c) New initiatives

- To help teachers ensure that curriculum is broad, balanced, relevant and displays differentiation, progression and continuity.
- To help teachers develop a curriculum which will prepare student for the world in which they live and work when they leave school.
- To help all teachers develop skills and strategies for the care of their students.
- To develop skills in providing cross-curricular activities within total school programmes.
- To enable teachers to develop with their students a positive attitude towards the multi-cultural nature of today's society.
- To sensitise teachers to sexist or stereotypical features in their school, in their own classrooms and in their own behaviour.
- To foster the development of curriculum leadership skills.
- To enable teachers to identify and provide for the everyday demands of children with special needs.
- To support the introduction of new curriculum areas.
- To retrain teachers for the implementation of national curriculum intiatives and new examinations.
- To provide a coherent programme of activities related to the development and use of profilling and records of achievement.
- To provide training in the potential and use of new technologies in education.
- To train all teachers to meet the requirements of health.

(d) Teachers' professional development

- To provide opportunities for teachers to acquire further qualifications.
- To provide opportunities to develop and support leadership in schools and the foster a cooperative approach to management.
- To support teachers in the continuous development of their subject knowledge and associated teaching strategies.

other critical factors that influence teaching and learning may still be absent—such as teachers' salaries and work conditions, good quality pre-service training and learning environment, and availability of the necessary materials. However, monitoring undertaken by the SHAPE Secretariat indicated that some changes had been introduced in classrooms: rote learning was giving way to a problem-solving approach; syllabus coverage was being replaced by individualised teaching and learning; and teaching for examinations was gradually giving way to teaching for competencies.

These achievements must be seen in conjunction with other efforts undertaken by the government in the field of basic education, such as support for the community building of classrooms and the massive production and distribution of free educational materials for use by the schools through the SIDA/FINNIDA-funded materials project.

MAJOR DIFFICULTIES

SHAPE has experienced a number of limitations during its implementation. Those most often mentioned include heavy work loads for field officers, especially inspectors, who are spearheading the implementation of SHAPE; inadequate training for coordinators concerned with resource and production work; too many donor-aided and donor-driven programmes in the field competing for the same agents and schools; role conflicts among SHAPE coordinators and administrators; lack of inspectors in some districts, hampering coordinating and leadership at district committee level; lack of incentives for field officers shouldering extra programme responsibilities; the severe difficulty in reaching many rural schools; frequent staff changes at various levels; friction and conflicts over the use of programme resources (such as transport).

The evaluation team mentioned the following specific problems/challenges for resource work: limited resources, especially at the lower levels of the system; confusion over the nature, use, and criteria for the construction of resource rooms and centres; inadequate reinforcement of the basic SHAPE message; inadequate and largely uncreative use of the centres and materials developed; inadequate knowledge on the impact of SHAPE resource work; random planning and implementation of foreign training and study tours; and increased teacher awareness of gender-sensitive curricula yet to be consistently reflected in practice.

The recommendations made by the evaluation team in this regard included:

- availability of increased resources for INSET activities at school and zone level;
- a more systematic scheme for the development of resource centres and increased funds to supplement local initiative;
- professional development through SHAPE and inclusion in the SHAPE structure to be more explicitly recognised in the career structure and promotion process of the Ministry of Education;
- foreign travel to be limited to more focused and intensive study visits, with more visits organised within Zambia; and
- further clarification of SHAPE's essential messages on gender issues, with stronger training opportunities for those meant to convey it.

While important advances have been made in terms of school-community partnership for production and self-help, the challenge remains as to how to extend and enhance such partnership in critical areas such as school management, curriculum development, and learning processes and results.

SHAPE FUNDING AND SUSTAINABILITY

External funding

Since its inception, SHAPE has largely depended on external financial resources,

particularly from SIDA, which provides funds for expatriate personnel, production projects in schools and colleges, monitoring/evaluation and research, construction of resource centres, renovations in special education schools and alterations to physical facilities in pre-service college for the purpose of introducing special education, study tours, staff development, seminars/workshops, purchase and maintenance of vehicles for the programme, and materials and equipment for agricultural production, industrial arts, educational technology and home economics.

Other external agencies have provided assistance through material support (NORAD, EC) or technical support through resource persons (British Council). Inputs by agencies in other programmes have been important parallel developments, such as FINNIDA's support to the practical subjects project, EC for the Zambia Mathematics and Science Teachers Education Project (ZAMSTEP), and the SIDA-FINNIDA sponsored Zambia Educational Materials Project (ZEMP).

Local funding

The Ministers of Education provide local staff to run the programme and pay their salaries. However, most of the coordinators in the programme are inspectors who combine their duties with SHAPE activities.

Most of the funds at college and school level are generated in-house through fund raising. Production projects in schools and colleges are playing an important role in providing the funds required for various activities. Through production projects schools are contributing to fund INSET activities at district and zone levels. Transportation and food costs for teachers attending zone seminars are met by individual schools, which are also responsible for vehicle maintenance. School donations are sent to district committees which in turn forward part of the donations to regional and zone committees. At school level, local communities and individuals, including private companies, contribute labour or cash towards school construction work.

The challenge of indigenous funding

Given Zambia's present economic situation, government authorities have increasingly promoted cost-sharing in education. According to some calculations, parents are currently contributing as much to primary education on a per capita basis as the government itself. Against this context, SHAPE has avoided adding an extra burden to parents and communities, by developing instead local sources of income, encouraging and enabling schools themselves to engage in production and income-generating activities. The experience of several districts shows that modest incomes from school production projects can sustain some essential work at school, zone, and district level.

"Despite material problems, every school in Zambia has benefitted from the SHAPE programme, and the Ministry would be unwise to let it go" (Ms. Musokotwane, Home Economics Specialist and INSET coordinator).

.At all events, it is clear that the continuation of SHAPE will depend heavily on funding from the Zambian government after the withdrawal of external funding. In its 1992 estimates of expenditure, the Ministries of Education accepted the inclusion of national counterpart funding. For this to work, the full integration of SHAPE activities into the mainstream of education is essential.

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SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

The delicate balance between content and method. One common tendency when using participatory methods is to overemphasize methods and to underestimate the content. In the enthusiastic support of methods one may forget the inseparability of content and method, and may ignore that the effective application of any learning method requires an analysis of the learning in all components—knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.

The delicate balancing of content and methods still challenges the JTI. During the first training course the emphasis was placed on experiencing a skills development and attitudinal change process. Issues of ECD content remained implicit rather than explicit. This was based on the assumption that the content was familiar to the participants while the method was not. However, in review of written questionnaires as well as observations of country training course, the need to provide trainees with more emphasis on content was apparent.

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"EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT : MORE AND BETTER" TRAINING TRAINERS IN THE ECD FIELD

"Early Childhood Development: More and Better" is Joint Training Initiative of the Bernard van Leer Foundation, UNICEF, UNESCO and Save The Children-USA. The following description is based on descriptive documents prepared by the supporting international agencies as well as informal progress reports from participating countries. A formal evaluation of the results and impact of the initiative will be available following the third and final year. The information presented here is based on a preliminary review of the qualitative reports and observations accumulated during years one and two.

What is the Joint Training Initiative ?

Eleven organizations concerned with ECD decided in 1992 to form a Coalition to strengthen the promotion of ECD as an integral component of the "expanded vision" of the *basic education* framework agreed upon in 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand, during the World Conference on "Education for All" (EFA). Capacity building was acknowledged as the key strategy to improve the quality of ECD and maximise its contribution to the EFA movement. The Joint Training Initiative emerged out of this understanding.

The "Early Childhood Development: MORE AND BETTER" Joint Training Initiative (JTI) is a three-year initiative that:

- emerged from the partnership of four international agencies committed to the well-being and the development of children: the Bernard van Leer Foundation, UNICEF, UNESCO and Save The Children–USA;
- started in selected countries in sub-Saharan Africa with a view to setting up a large-scale training programme;
- enhances the skills of existing "core" trainers in the field of early childhood development, and creates a multiplier effect by building on the knowledge and skills of those who are already trainers in ECD, rather than producing new trainers;
- stresses the need for ongoing monitoring and evaluation so that lessons learned can be applied not only to the countries involved but to other countries, and to enhance teacher training at all levels.

Some of the characteristics of the JTI are:

- it operates in nine sub-Saharan African countries: Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Uganda, Zanzibar and Zimbabwe;
- the "core" trainers are selected by the countries themselves (two per country);
- an international coordinating team (the *facilitators)*, consisting of representatives from each of the international partners, is responsible for the trainers, training, and their in situ monitoring and support throughout the three-year period;
- core trainers participate in a two week training in year one, and a shorter course in the second and third year of the project;

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
(Excerpts)
Article 6

1. States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.
2. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

- training courses are complemented with support visits to the trainers in their countries. These visits and support work are provided by the same *facilitators* who conduct the training. This ensures continuation and cohesiveness and avoids problems created by conventional training schemes where the trainers and those who do to evaluation are different individuals, often with different criteria;

- a "cascade" training strategy has been developed that operates as follows: a core group of trainers is trained by the international facilitators; each team of co-trainers is expected to train a group of 15 to 20 national trainers in their respective countries, selecting them from people working with young children and their families in education, health or community development settings.

Why Africa ? The selection of countries

Sub-Saharan Africa was chosen as the initial focus of the JTI, because of the urgent need and demand for capacity-building in Early Child Development. Initially, 11 countries were nominated by the four international partners, a number considered manageable in terms of the financing, organization, implementation and evaluation of the programme.

The selection of countries was based on the following criteria:

- the country's commitment to participate in the three-year initiative;

- the nomination of core trainers who were experienced, ready to take on new ideas, sufficiently influential and committed to ensure the long-term success of the JTI;

- the nomination of a high-level person in a relevant government department, to support the initiative and to act as a national reference point;

- the provision of opportunities for core trainers to integrate the JTI training approach into practice by training groups of national trainers;

- the country's assurance that the JTI complemented national ECD policies and that it would contribute to future policy making and planning.

Selection of core trainers. Criteria for the selection of core trainers by each country were discussed with government departments and NGOs before core trainers were chosen. The criteria included:

- ability to work as a team and in a co-trainer situation;
- ability to speak and write English;
- experience of training at a level high enough to be respected in the country and possibly the region;
- policy vision;
- flexibility and ability to relate well to people at all levels.

A group of 21 trainers were selected as a result of this process (two per country; one country with three participants, and another one with 4). The profile of the trainers is as follows : 18 are women and 3 are men; ages range from late 20s to late 40s (one person is aged 60); they are carrying out a training role in their own countries. They work for a wide range of institutions including the Ministry of Education (10), Teacher Training Colleges (5), NGOs (3), Ministries other than Education (2), and UNICEF (1). This diversified background is a strength of the programme as it enhances the exchange of experiences and the quality of learning from each other.

Content. The key content areas covered in the training programme are :

- adult/child interaction;
- working with parents and the community;

Article 18

1. States Parties shall use their best effort to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. Parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern.
2. For the purpose of guaranteeing and promoting the rights set forth in the present Convention, States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities and shall ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children.
3. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from child-care services and facilities for which they are eligible.

Article 27

1. States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.
2. The parent(s) or others responsible for the child have the primary responsibility to secure, within their abilities and financial capacities, the conditions of living necessary for the child's development.
3. States Parties, in accordance with national conditions and within their means, shall take appropriate measures to assist parents and others responsible for the child to implement this right and shall in case of need provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing.
4. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to secure the recovery of maintenance for the child from the parents of other persons having financial responsibility for the child, both within the State Party and from abroad. In particular, where the person having financial responsibility for the child lives in a State different from that of the child. States Parties shall promote the accession to international agreements or the conclusion of such agreements, as well as the making of other appropriate arrangements.

- critical analysis of existing pre-school curricula and parent education programmes;
- applying participatory methods to the ECD curriculum;
- preparing participatory learning materials;
- data gathering and evaluation knowledge and skills;
- participatory interaction skills;
- influencing ECD policies at the national level;
- mobilizing communities around ECD; and
- planning training for national ECD cadres.

Such content areas are key for ECD work and, however, are rarely or insufficiently covered in conventional existing ECD training.

Approach and methodology. The teaching-learning approach adopted *experiential* and *participatory (see box).* This applies to the learning environment and the education methods used in the training courses, but also to the rest of activities that are implied within the JTI. A number of key principles have guided the entire programme and includes: building on strengths and experience; promoting non-hierarchial relationships; teamwork; building confidence in individuals and groups; and working in partnership.

EXPERIMENTAL AND PARTICIPATORY LEARNING

"The terms active and participatory refer to the trainees' behaviour in the learning situation. Instead of the trainee being a passive recipient of a one-way process of knowledge transmission, he or she becomes an active participator with the trainer in defining and designing the learning situation. The term experiential refers to a learning situation in which the trainer deliberately draws on past and present experiences of the trainee to enrich the learning process. Working together, trainer and trainee can construct situations which give the trainee first-hand experiences during the training itself. These experience can illuminate and bring greater understanding of theoretical concepts.

Source: Torkington 1996

An important feature of the methodology is the attention given to the needs of adult learners, which includes not only trainers and trainees but parents and community members. This is particularly important considering the lack of attention of past ECD training (and teacher training in general) to the principles of adult learning.

Teamwork, an essential feature of participatory learning is encouraged and practiced during the training courses (trainers working in small groups), and by the facilitators who work together as co-facilitators in the training courses.

The training scheme envisages a 'feedback cycle' that combines theory and practice through five stages: (1) starting from concrete experience; (2) observing and reflecting in a supportive situation; (3) forming abstract concepts; (4) testing the implications of the concepts in new situations; and (5) feeding back to concrete experience.

Materials. Several materials have been developed under the JTI. A training manual, based on the trainers' work and comments during the first two training courses, describes in detail the training course. A training pack developed by Bernard van Leer and UNESCO has also been developed to provide trainers with additional reference material. Monitoring and evaluation instruments and guidelines for reporting on training events, for observing trainers' facilitation skills, and for assessing early childhood care-givers have been developed. Some core trainers have translated materials into their own language and have introduced minor adaptations to suit the local culture and the needs of the trainees. Several countries have developed parent education materials for illiterate parents.

Costs The Bernard van Leer Foundation is the major funder of all aspects of the training of the two trainers per country, including monitoring and evaluation of the entire process, the costs of the training courses and the *in situ* support. The estimated costs for training a trainer over the three-year period is US $3,500 per year. The other three international partners, UNESCO, Save the Children, and UNICEF, contribute in cash or kind.

The costs of the national training courses conducted by the trainers are covered by each individual, either by Government departments or country offices of the involved international partners.

THE TRAINING INITIATIVE IN MOTION

Training of trainers (TOT) courses. Two TOT courses have been conducted thus far—one in Johannesburg, South Africa in early 1995, and the second in Harare, Zimbabwe, in early 1996. The third course will be conducted in 1997 in The Hague, Headquarters of the Bernard van Leer Foundation, leading agency of the JTI. Twenty one core trainers from nine countries have attended such courses. Trainers from two countries did not participate in the second training.

The first TOT course emphasized experimental and participatory learning methods, the second TOT course was designed to (a) address gaps in content and method identified in the first workshop; (b) reflect upon and discuss training in practice issues and concerns and (c) plan country programmes as well as the sustainability of the JTI.

Recognizing a shortcoming of the first training course, a specific goal of the Harare TOT course was to encourage participants to be more creative in their understanding and application of participatory training methods. To achieve this goal, the JTI team tried to balance content and methods in several ways. For example, a session was introduced on 'applying experiential participatory methods to conventional areas of the ECD curriculum'. Working in groups participants were asked to choose an area of the conventional curriculum, such as language development, and reach agreement on the learning objectives of a training session on this subject and to plan experiential participatory activities which would reach these learning objectives. Country teams were also asked in advance of the training to prepare a session using a participatory experiential method that they had carried out during the year between the two training courses. Through these activities, trainers recognized that these methods can be applied to whatever the content of the learning is and to try to encourage them to get away from a 'model' course and plan more imaginative culturally appropriate training courses.

Country visits. All core trainers were visited in their own countries by the facilitators. Such visits have provided further guidance and confidence to the core trainers in carrying out their activities with the national trainers. In order to back up the efforts of the core trainers parts of the facilitators' time in each country has been devoted to advocacy and policy dialogue with government officials and leading personnel at the institutions where trainers work.

National training courses. All the core trainers have carried out at least one training course for national trainers in their own countries as a direct follow-up of their own TOT courses. Various national teams have conducted more than one training course. Such training courses have also had a duration of two weeks. In some cases, the same group of trainees have attended the two courses; in other cases, each workshop has been addressed to a different set of participants.

In most instances, participants represented both government and non-governmental institutions. Participants have been very mixed also in terms of knowledge and background of ECD-related issues. In all cases, trainees lack of familiarity with participatory teaching-learning methods has been reported.

COMMENTS FROM TOT PARTICIPANTS

"I use participatory methods now in everything I do. The only way to learn and live your life is participatory and active listening."

"I have learned that I need to prepare well and visualize questions that will come from my trainees. I have developed better partnerships and increased my confidence."

"ECD is a new field for me and I am quite happy to be associated with this initiative. My institution is now depending on me. The TOT was a big landmark in my professional career. To develop a policy for ECD is very rewarding. Professionally I feel as if I have grown."

"After the first TOT, I was not so sure they would accept these new methods. The trainers were eager to learn. Slowly we won them over to our side. I could feel the change within myself. When holding a workshop there was quite a lot of frustration, but overcoming obstacles became our strength. We have gained the respect of our colleagues.

EXCERPTS FROM TRAINERS' REPORTS ON NATIONAL TRAINING COURSES

"In the second training, it became evident that the trainers still lack two important skills: (1) lack of knowledge and information on ECD; and (2) lack of skills in engaging and extending the learning through proper questioning. We felt that because the participants were not so well equipped with ECD knowledge, they were unable to ask the right questions to extend the learning. We feel that in the next international training initiative, more time should be spent on consulting on this issue."

Documentation and evaluation. Reports on general progress have been provided for each year and reports on progress in each country have been prepared. A final report of the initiative will be ready in 1997.

A primary objective of the evaluation is to assess to effects of the TOT course on participants' knowledge, skills, attitudes as well as their ability to strengthen ECD policy. An emphasis was placed on understanding the range of influences which support or hinder the core trainers' application of participatory training methods following the TOT courses. A number of instruments were created to assess the characteristics of the learners themselves as well as aspects of the local and external work environments which supported or constrained their training efforts.

"The whole issue of support, particularly by government heads, is essential in implementation but, most importantly, in sustaining the enthusiasm and commitment of the national trainers. May be we should discuss strategies on getting the supervisors more supportive."

In addition to the evaluation and monitoring of the JTI, evaluation methods to help trainers develop tools to monitor and evaluate the impact of their own training at the country level is an integral component of the JTI. It is hoped that several countries will also evaluate the impact of these enhanced training methods on the families and children receiving ECD services. In this regard, prototype instrument to assess the quality of child care services has been developed.

SOME POSITIVE IMPACTS

- **Increase in core trainers' personal confidence and competence as trainers.** At the first training course most of the trainers were unfamiliar with experiential participatory methods and arrived unsure of themselves and not sure what to expect. Gradually they began to relax and to contribute less tentatively. The methodology itself assists them in this direction for a number of reasons. Unlike conventional training curricula that start with theory, from the general and from what is unknown to the participants, here the training starts with the more general aspects. It builds upon and begins with the concrete and immediate experience of the participants. The course starts with a focus on the self and the group, then moves out to the child, then to context of the child (the family and the community), and then to the wider society. This emphasizes the fact that this is an adult education situation and, although it is in the context of training of trainers in ECD, the trainers themselves are at the center of this learning process.

"The participants were new to participatory learning. At the beginning some of the participants were confused. Because they were waiting for lectures we explained to them about the method and the next day we saw that their interest was raised."

At the second course there were a number of positive changes with regard to participant } physical appearance (clothes, hair styles, smiles, and the way they held themselves had changed). The pace and volume of their interventions in group and plenary work, increased. This enthusiasm was also captured in the photographs of previous national training courses which were brought by trainers to share with each other. All trainers had been very active at home. They carried out national training courses, organized and presented at meetings of policy-makers, members of Parliament, and international organizations.

During the second training course as well as the follow-up country visits it was possible to see the close and emphathetic relationships which had been established in the country training teams. It is assumed that much of these changes and gains in self-esteem and confidence have resulted from the training methodology and the overall teaching-learning approach adopted by the JTI.

"We covered all the areas well, especially the area when participants worked from their memories of their own childhoods to explore the needs of the children. Participants found it interesting to discover that they also developed physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially and morally in their childhood activities just like children of the present age."

Impact at the country level. One of the most important outcomes of the Joint Training Initiative has been the impact its participants have made on national ECD policy development. In all countries governments, NGO's, and donor agencies have become more aware of the needs of the young child and the importance of a well-trained body of professional and paraprofessionals to respond to the needs of young children and their families.

- **Reputation and increased demand.** Reputation of the JTI is spreading through Africa and beyond. Demands from countries in Africa and elsewhere to be included in the initiative continue to increase.

SOME PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

- **The selection of candidates and country teamwork.** Participants that met the expected criteria were not easy to find. The final choice was left to the countries, and the JTI team did not interview potential candidates. Inevitably, there was wide variation in the caliber of participants, the criterion regarding the level of influence being the most ignored.

  Hierarchical relationships at country level, sometimes between the team of national partners themselves—one senior and one junior trainer—contradict, in some cases, the spirit and the effective application of experiential participatory training. The terms used in national reports—top-level trainers versus national trainers—illustrate the prevalence of the hierarchical mentality entrenched in the institutional ethos and the societal values.

"There is a severe problem of low awareness of the society at large about early childhood development."

- **The training competence.** A deep understanding and effective application of participatory methods in education and training does not take place overnight. There is a risk of capturing the superficial aspects but practice remains the same. The intentions expressed may not necessarily reflect reality.

- **The delicate balance between content and method.** One common tendency when using participatory methods is to overemphasize methods and to underestimate the content. In the enthusiastic support of methods one may forget the inseparability of content and method, and may ignore that the effective application of any learning method requires an analysis of the learning in all components—knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.

  The delicate balancing of content and methods still challenges the JTI. During the first training course the emphasis was placed on experiencing a skills development and attitudinal change process. Issues of ECD content remained implicit rather than explicit. This was based on the assumption that the content was familiar to the participants while the method was not. However, in review of written questionnaires as well as observations of country training course, the need to provide trainees with more emphasis on content was apparent.

"The course content was the same as the Johannesburg training, the time which we gave to the sessions was also the same but it was difficult for the participants to finish the task in the given time."

- **The cultural "appropriateness" of participatory learning.** The cultural acceptability and appropriateness of experiential participatory learning was initially challenged by participants. They have come to recognize that this method is always culturally appropriate because its knowledge base is first and foremost built on the experience of the learners, whoever they are. However, a more systemic challenge continues to confront the trainers. This training approach conflicts with the highly formal, non-participatory and hierarchical education and training methods characteristic at many institutions in their countries.

- **Materials development.** One major problem has been the lack of basic materials to carry out the training activities at the national level. Large sheets of paper, felt pens, cellotape, taken for granted by facilitators in industrialized countries, have been unobtainable or in very short supply. The JTI team has looked for ways to provide these materials to at least the core trainers but the problem is more acute as the training reaches district and local levels.

- **Support visits.** Visiting and monitoring nine countries has proven difficult to arrange and to carry out. The original plan included two visits per year to each country, but this has not been possible for every country.

- **The sustainability of the efforts.** The effective multiplier effect of this effort depends largely on the participating countries. Financial resources to continue the training of national cadres is only one condition for such sustainability. A commitment to ECD efforts in general is essential, as well as the required support to the core trainers and the national trainers. The lack of institutional support and of an overall environment supportive of ECD activities is acknowledged by many core trainers. Lack of transport appears as a common constraint to training courses and follow-up visits. Dropout of trainees as a result of transfers to other sections or positions, is also mentioned. A report from the Namibian team suggests to include in the TOT course a discussion on "strategies on getting the supervisors more supportive". The need for a strong and ongoing advocacy effort from all sides involved—international partners, core trainers, national trainers—is critical.

In addressing this issue, the core trainers have assumed responsibility for the sustainability of the initiative following the initial three year funding. They have formed two sub-regional groups in an effort to develop and propose a long term strategic plan.

"Be adventurous and decide with your trainees what content areas need to be covered and then plan the methods you will use to draw out the knowledge the trainees already have and the questions they need to work on to extend their knowledge. Don't forget the discussion we had about the need for you [illegible] to have 'external' information available to 'inject' when appropriate and not to 'force-feed'!" (Excerpt of a letter addressed to the core trainers after the second training workshop by K. Torkington, Head of Training, Bernard van Leer Foundation).

CONCLUSION

An expected result and possible indicator of impact of the JTI on key training institutions in the participating countries is that core trainers accept, internalize and put to practice the principles and methods of experiential and participatory learning into their daily ECD training work. In as much as some of the core trainers work in institutions mainly concerned with the training of primary school teachers, the possibility of influencing the training of such teachers is viewed as essential and an important long term benefit of the initiative to a country's overall approach to educational training.

Sources:

- Kate Torkington, *The Rationale of Experiential and Participatory Learning*, Working Papers in Early Childhood Development, N• 16. Bernard van Leer Foundation, The Hague, February 1996.
- Kate Torkington with Cassie Landers, *Enhancing the Skills of Early Childhood Trainers*, Training Pack, Bernard van Leer Foundation/UNESCO, Paris, 1995.